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## THE FIRST TWO READERS OF PETRARCH'S TALE OF GRISELDA

The letter which Petrarch wrote to Boccaccio on June 8,<sup>1</sup> 1374,<sup>2</sup> only a few weeks before his own death, describes the effect produced by the reading of the tale of Griselda upon two friends of Petrarch's, one a Paduan and the other a Veronese. As translated by Professor Robinson,<sup>3</sup> this part of the letter (*Opera*, 1581, p. 546) runs:

In the first place, I gave it to one of our mutual friends in Padua to read, a man of excellent parts and wide attainments. When scarcely halfway through the composition, he was suddenly arrested by a burst of tears. When again, after a short pause, he made a manful attempt to continue, he was again interrupted by a sob. He then realized that he could go no farther himself, and handed the story to one of his companions, a man of education, to finish. How others may view the occurrence I cannot, of course, say; for myself, I put a most favorable construction upon it, believing that I recognize the indications of a most compassionate disposition; a more kindly nature, indeed, I never remember to have met. As I saw him weep as he read, the words of the Satirist came back to me:

Nature, who gave us tears, by that alone  
Proclaims she made the feeling heart our own;  
And 't is our noblest sense.

—Juvenal xv. 131 (Gifford's translation)

<sup>1</sup> VI Idus Junius. Mather renders as June 10.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Mather, in *Mod. Lang. Notes*, XII (1897), 1 ff. For confirmation of this date, see De Sade, *Mémoires*, III, 797; Blanc, in Ersch und Gruber, *Allg. Encyc.*, III, 19, 242; Baldelli, *Del Petrarca* (1797), p. 320; Bromly, in *Athenaeum*, Nov. 19, 1898; Fracassetti, in *Lettere . . . delle Cose Familiari*, III, 21. Robinson and Rolfe inadvertently assign the whole letter to 1373.

<sup>3</sup> Robinson and Rolfe, *Petrarch*, pp. 195-96.

Some time after, another friend of ours, from Verona (for all is common between us, even our friends), having heard of the effect produced by the story in the first instance, wished to read it for himself. I readily complied, as he was not only a good friend, but a man of ability. He read the narrative from beginning to end, without stopping once. Neither his face nor his voice betrayed the least emotion, not a tear or a sob escaped him. "I too," he said at the end, "would have wept, for the subject certainly excites pity, and the style is well adapted to call forth tears, and I am not hard-hearted; but I believed, and still believe, that this is all an invention."

Who were these two men, upon whom the tale produced such very different effects? This question, so far as I am aware, has never been mooted.

The Paduan was, it appears: (1) an intimate of Petrarch's; (2) a friend also of Boccaccio's; (3) a man of sensibility; (4) of rank such as to be attended by a suite.<sup>1</sup>

With what Paduan of high rank, brilliant parts, extensive knowledge, and compassionate disposition, a friend, too, of Boccaccio's, was Petrarch intimately enough acquainted to furnish the occasion for this incident?

Only one man, I believe, fulfils all these conditions, and that is Francesco da Carrara, Lord of Padua, known in later times as Francesco il Vecchio, because his son, also named Francesco (Novello, or Junior), was Lord of Padua from June to November, 1388, upon his father's abdication.

1. That Francesco da Carrara was an intimate of Petrarch's is shown by the following facts:

a) His father, Giacomo da Carrara (Lord of Padua 1345-50) was much attached to Petrarch,<sup>2</sup> who repaid him with the utmost gratitude and esteem, and composed his epitaph<sup>3</sup> after his assassination on December 21, 1350.

b) Francesco frequently visited Petrarch at Arquà.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This I infer from the Latin: "Eam uni suorum comitum, docto satis viro, legendam tradidit." Here the word *comes*, especially as used in the plural, suggests, in contrast with, say, *sodalis*, a member of a retinue. Then, whatever the precise sense that one attributes to *satis*, it is evident that Petrarch, in his "docto satis viro," intimates a degree of inferiority to the "vir altissimi ingenii, multiplicitisque notitiae" (cf. "vir ingentis sapientiae," below, p. 131, note 5).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Fam.* xi. 2, 3; *Letter to Posterity* (cf. Robinson and Rolfe, pp. 74-75); *Sen.* x. 2, for which see Fracassetti, *op. cit.*, II, 86.

<sup>3</sup> See Fracassetti, III, 33.

<sup>4</sup> *Var.* 31; Fracassetti, V, 320; cf. III, 26; Verri, *Storia della Marca Trivigiana*, XIV, 148; Cittadella, *Storia della Dominazione Carrarese*, I, 284-85.

c) On Petrarch's return from Pavia in July, 1368, Francesco came to the gate of the city to meet him, sent his servants to Petrarch's home with gifts, and went himself in the evening with his suite to visit him, stayed to supper, and afterward conversed with Petrarch till bedtime (*Sen. xi. 2: Opera*, 1581, p. 883).<sup>1</sup>

d) Petrarch's last public act was to accompany Francesco Novello to Venice, and there speak (October 3, 1373) before the senate, when the heir to the dominion of Padua proffered his father's apologies at the conclusion of the war between the two states. This was at the particular request of Francesco, the father.<sup>2</sup>

e) In his will, dated April 4, 1370, Petrarch bequeathed to Francesco a picture of the Virgin by Giotto, saying he possessed nothing worthy of him.

f) Petrarch addressed to Francesco his treatise, *De republica optime administranda*,<sup>3</sup> which begins with praises of the prince.

g) Petrarch dedicated to Francesco his *De viris illustribus*.<sup>4</sup>

h) Francesco, according to Petrarch, loved him as a son,<sup>5</sup> just as Francesco's father had loved him as a brother.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Cum paucis ad me veniens, ac coenanti adsidens, et post coenam illic inter libros in noctem usque concubiam comitatus confabulationibus colloquiisque gratissimis."

<sup>2</sup> *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, XIX, 751; Vercl, XIV, 231-32; Cittadella, I, 337; Pullin, in *Petrarca e Venezia* (Venice, 1874), pp. 310-27; Körting, *Petrarca's Leben und Werke*, p. 444; Fracassetti, *Lettere . . . delle Cose Familiari*, I, 180; III, 26.

<sup>3</sup> *Opera*, 1581, pp. 372-86.

<sup>4</sup> Edited by Razzolini (Bologna, 1874-79). For the dedication, see Körting, *op. cit.*, p. 594, and compare Nollac, *Pétrarque et l'Humanisme*, 2d ed., p. 4: "Les bienfaits qu'il reçut de François de Carrare, vers la fin de sa vie, le décidèrent. Le seigneur de Padoue était digne de cet honneur par l'intérêt sincère qu'il portait aux lettres et à l'Antiquité, ce qui recommande sa mémoire comme celle d'un des premiers princes de la Renaissance."

<sup>5</sup> *Sen. xv. 5* (*Opera*, 1581, p. 938), written in 1373: "Locorum dominus, vir ingentis sapientiae, non me ut dominus, sed ut filius diligit atque honorat, et per seipsum sic affectus, et magnanimitas patris memor, qui me dilexit ut fratrem."

<sup>6</sup> The relative ages of Petrarch and the two Carraras can only be approximately ascertained. According to Litla (*Famiglie Celebri Italiane*, II, Milan, 1825), Giacomo, the father, was married twice, in 1318 and 1341, and Francesco in 1345, Francesco Novello being born May 19, 1359 (Brown, *Studies in the History of Venice*, I, 128, says 1352). Since Petrarch was born in 1304, Giacomo must have been somewhat older, for, although marriages were then often contracted at an early age (Novello was married at twenty to a bride of fourteen, see p. 137), yet we can hardly suppose Giacomo to have been married at fourteen (he was accounted old before his death in 1393; see *R.I.S.*, XVII, 814). Francesco cannot have been born before 1319, and was of an age to marry in 1345. If we suppose him to have been born in 1325, he would have been old enough to marry in 1345, and young enough for Petrarch to regard him as a son, since there would have been twenty-one years between their ages.

i) Francesco was something of a poet himself, and may have been indebted to Petrarch in the composition or polishing of his verses,<sup>1</sup> though his *capitoli* on the loss and recovery of Padua, the only specimens of his poetry preserved to us, were written in November, 1389, more than fifteen years after Petrarch's death.<sup>2</sup>

j) Francesco attended the funeral of Petrarch<sup>3</sup> at Arquà (a dozen miles from Padua), where every honor was shown to the dead poet.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Fracassetti, III, 26; Lami, *Delicia Eruditorum*, XIV, xli; Cittadella, I, 469-70.

<sup>2</sup> The following account of a journey by Francesco Novello from Piedmont over the Mont Cenis to the abbey of St. Antoine, seven and one-half miles northwest of St. Marcellin, near the Isère, between Grenoble and Valence, affords a fair specimen of his father's poetic merits. The description of the journey and of Savoy may be compared with *The Last Months of Chaucer's Earliest Patron* (*Trans. Conn. Acad. of Arts and Sciences*, XXI, 42). It will be noticed that line 15 contains an allusion (*l'ultima sera*) to Dante, *Purg.*, Bk. I, 58. The extract is from Lami, *Delicia Eruditorum*, XVI, xvlix of this part:

Prese comiato, uscì fuor della porta,  
Per uscir fuor del Piamonte paese,  
Ver Mon Caler prese la via più corta.  
Camminando arrivò nel Savogiese,  
E quì ne licenziò la scorta fida.  
E'n verso suso montò in Mon Senese.  
O beati color, che in Dio si fida,  
E che gli son divoti e riverenti,  
E che'l disidran per lor scorta e guida.  
Salendo il monte sentiva gran venti,  
Ma tanto andò, che giunse alla Ferrera,  
Ove per freddo gli batteva i denti.  
E io, el ver dirò, così m'avera.  
Che io v'ebbi sì gran freddo d'Agosto,  
Ch'io mi pensai sentir l'ultima sera.  
E quella ritornando al suo proposto  
Disse, Qui si conviene aver brigata  
Per poter trapassar l'Alpe più tosto.  
Che gl'era tanto il ghiaccio e la gelata,  
Che non si cognoscea vie nè sentiere,  
Siccome tu vedesti altra fiata.  
Passando Mon Senese, poi mestiere  
Fu di pigliar la via verso quel Santo,  
Ch'è presso a tre giornate [a quel quartiere?]  
Ma quì mi piacque riposare alquanto,  
E lassar gir zoso [giuso] volse l'Acquabella,  
Che'l terreno è sicuro in ogni canto.  
Del Savoin paese si novella,  
Aver la gente sua tanto piacevole,  
Che pochi luoghi trovo par di quella.  
E la contrada è tanto dilettevole,  
E ubertosa di campi e di broli,  
E d'ulivi e di vigne ben fruttevole.  
Quivi è ogni diletto, che tu vuoi,  
Come di pesci, uccelli, o di cacciare,  
E orsi, e cervi, e daini, e cavriuoli.  
Per quò, che io mi possa ricordare,  
Tanta iustizia trovai in quel paese,  
Ch'ognun sicuramente vi può andare.

<sup>3</sup> *R.I.S.*, XVII, 213-14; Cittadella, I, 351; cf. my article in *Romanic Review*, VIII, 222-24.

<sup>4</sup> A large part of Petrarch's books passed, after his death, into the possession of Francesco (Nolhac, I, 99, who says this was due to his love of antiquity and his respect for the poet). On the friendship of Petrarch and Francesco, see, in general, Cittadella, I, 284-86; Körting, pp. 433-34; Calthrop, *Petrarch*, p. 292. Lami, *Delicia Eruditorum*, XIV, prints a poem by Zenone da Pistoia on the death of Petrarch, written the same year, 1374; this contains various references to the friendship between Petrarch and Francesco da Carrara, for which see pp. x-xii.



2. It cannot be proved that Boccaccio was a friend of Francesco da Carrara, but that he had had the opportunity to meet him is rendered very probable by the fact that he was in Padua with Petrarch on two different occasions, in 1351 and 1368—the first time when Francesco, with his uncle Giacomino (Jacopino), had but recently (December 22, 1350) succeeded to his father; the second, less than six years before Petrarch wrote to him in 1374. The first of these visits was to bring the letter from the Florentine government inviting Petrarch to return as professor to that city. Boccaccio appears to have arrived early in April, 1351, and to have spent several days with Petrarch,<sup>1</sup> in occupations which Boccaccio described in a letter of July 18, 1353.<sup>2</sup> Concerning the visit of 1368, we learn from a letter of Petrarch's (*Sen. x. 5*), written on October 3, that Boccaccio had left Padua, and, from another to the same friend shortly before (*Sen. x. 4*), that Boccaccio was then with him. As Petrarch had not returned to Padua from Pavia till July 19,<sup>3</sup> it is evident that Boccaccio must have arrived after this date. We thus know that Francesco was in Padua on July 19, and that he was there on October 28,<sup>4</sup> and we have no reason to think he was absent between those dates; hence on this occasion, too, Boccaccio may well have met him.

3. Francesco's sensibility is authenticated by Petrarch in his treatise, *On the Best Method of Administering a State*, addressed, as we have seen, to that ruler. Discoursing on the means by which a prince may gain the affection of his subjects, after laying down certain general principles, he adds:<sup>5</sup> "But there are other means of winning love, slighter, indeed, but effectual; I grant that they are hard for arrogant rulers, but they are easy and pleasant for a soul inclined to humanity. They are these—to pity, to console, to visit, to encourage. In these arts no one is your superior. Employ them whenever

<sup>1</sup> Fracassetti, III, 40, 43.

<sup>2</sup> Corazzini, *Lettere* (Florence, 1877), pp. 391–94; Körting, *Boccaccio's Leben und Werke*, p. 192.

<sup>3</sup> See my paper, *The Last Months of Chaucer's Earliest Patron* (*Trans. Conn. Acad. of Arts and Sciences*, XXI, p. 84).

<sup>4</sup> Verci, XIV, *Documenti*, pp. 30–31.

<sup>5</sup> *Opera*, 1581, pp. 379–80: "Sunt et alia leviora ad captandum amorem, tamen effcacia; superbis fateri dura principibus, sed, ubi se ad humanitatem animus inclinavit, et facilia et jucunda. Ea vero sunt huiusmodi—compati, consolari, visitare, alloqui. . . . Et harum quoque artium nullus abundantior est quam tu. Illis utere; naturamque tuam sequere; sic optato provenient universa."

possible. By thus following your own nature, you will find everything give way to your desires."

It is true that Francesco imprisoned his uncle Giacomino in 1355, and kept him in captivity till his death in 1372; but it was after he had compassed Francesco's death by poison, as was clearly proved by the confession of his accomplice and agent, and the discovery of the poison.<sup>1</sup>

It is true that, on August 28, 1373, a certain Zaccaria da Modena was judicially condemned to be drawn by his feet at the tail of an ass round the public square of Padua, and thence to the cemetery, where he was to be beheaded; and this was so done.<sup>2</sup> On January 23, 1374, by order of the court, Alvise and Filippo Forzate, Francesco's uncles, were publicly beheaded.<sup>3</sup> But Zaccaria was proved to be an agent of Francesco's brother, Marsilio, who was taking measures, with the aid of the Venetian government, to dispossess Francesco of his sovereignty; and the two latter were conspirators for the assassination of Francesco.<sup>4</sup> Cittadella (p. 343) blames him for his clemency on this latter occasion, since he only sentenced to imprisonment for life, instead of to death, his own brother, Niccolò, and his illegitimate half-brother, Bonifacio, Abbot of Praglia, "non volendo il Signore bruttarsi le mani nel sangue suo."<sup>5</sup>

As to the affection and confidence displayed toward Francesco in the height of his war with Venice (1372), we are told (Cittadella, I, 317): "Neither did the asperities of the war turn the hearts of the

<sup>1</sup> *R.I.S.*, XVII, 41-44. Cittadella's reflections are (I, 234-35, cf. I, 467): "More to be wondered at is the moderation of Francesco, who, naturally ambitious, accustomed to the sudden violence of war, and threatened in his rule and in his life, was able to conquer his own natural propensities, . . . and content himself with a judicial punishment, without resorting to private vengeance. He is the more commendable because he was surrounded with examples of bloody reprisals—a warrior truly magnanimous, who was willing to stain the field of battle with the blood of his enemies, but not the scaffold with that of a citizen and a relative." A modern writer on Italy has said (Heywood, *Palio and Ponte*, London [1904], p. 153): "The *vendetta* was as much a duty as in the days when Dante was ashamed to look upon the face of Geri del Bello, feeling himself a sharer in his shame. Even at their mothers' knees, children were taught the sacred obligations of revenge."

<sup>2</sup> *R.I.S.*, XVII, 189.

<sup>3</sup> *R.I.S.*, XVII, 207.

<sup>4</sup> See Cittadella, I, 331-33, 340-34.

<sup>5</sup> *R.I.S.*, XVII, 206. His own brother, Marsilio, was to receive 15,000 golden ducats a year from Venice if the conspiracy had succeeded (see the written promise by the Doge Andrea Contarini in Cittadella, I, 472-73). For Petrarch's reflections upon the conspiracy, see *Sen.* xiv. 1 (*Opera*, 1581, pp. 931-92).

citizens against Carrara; rather was he so loved that all classes spontaneously offered their money to provide for his needs, and the physicians, with the same hand which they stretched out for the relief of the sick, lavished their gold to restore the strength of the harassed city. . . . Blessings on the prince whose rule represents, in the eyes of his subjects, the public weal."

Concerning the Veronese we may reasonably infer: (1) that he was of station not inferior to Petrarch, and probably of similar rank to the Paduan; (2) that he sometimes visited Padua; (3) that Boccaccio was not personally acquainted with him; (4) that he was harder-hearted, or perhaps harder-headed, than the Paduan.

1. Petrarch, except rarely and for special reasons, mentions in his letters only persons of his own condition—poets, scholars, clericals—or men of distinctly higher rank—princes, cardinals, and the like. Since he speaks of the Veronese as a friend, he presumably belonged to one of these classes. The Veronese friends whose names occur in Petrarch's pages are Guglielmo di Pastrengo, Rinaldo da Villafranca, of the first class, and Mastino II della Scala and Azzo di Correggio, of the second. Of all these, we know that Azzo had died in 1362, Mastino in 1351, Pastrengo before 1370 (probably), while the date of Rinaldo da Villafranca's death is uncertain, though not earlier, it is believed, than 1358.<sup>1</sup> We have no need, then, I shall assume, to reckon with any of these; and Petrarch is scarcely likely to have acquired new friends of his own station in more recent years. It is therefore natural to consider whom he might have known of higher rank. The man who at that time ruled Verona was Can Signorio della Scala (ruled 1359–75). Our reasons for considering it likely that he is the Veronese in question are these:

a) Petrarch had known his father, Mastino, to whom he had addressed a Latin poetical epistle,<sup>2</sup> and who had perhaps urged him to make a considerable visit in Verona in May, 1351<sup>3</sup>—apparently the last time he was in that city.

b) In 1352 a canonry was bestowed upon Petrarch's son, Giovanni, probably by Can Signorio's brother, Can Grande II

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Fracassetti, II, 443; III, 8, 47, 204; V, 344.

<sup>2</sup> *Opera*, 1581, III, 86.

<sup>3</sup> Fracassetti, III, 8, 47.

(d. December 13, 1359). This having been forfeited in 1354, at which time Petrarch himself seems to have fallen into disgrace with Can Grande,<sup>1</sup> was restored by Can Signorio in 1361, and Petrarch was taken back to favor.<sup>2</sup> Petrarch could therefore from this time on consider Can Signorio as a friend.

c) The interest felt by Can Signorio in the arts is shown by his erection of the Clock Tower on the Piazza del Mercato (now Piazza delle Erbe?); of a tower in the Adige near the stone Ponte delle Navi, destroyed by a freshet in 1757; of the wall formerly surrounding the precinct of the Palazzo del Capitano; of the Gardello tower (according to Verci, in the Piazza dei Signori; perhaps confounded by Baedeker with the Clock Tower), but especially by his tomb,<sup>3</sup> the most conspicuous<sup>4</sup> among those of the Scaligers, constructed by Bonino da Campione during Can Signorio's lifetime. His interest in literature can only be conjectured.

2. Whether Can Signorio was likely to have visited Padua in 1373 or 1374 would depend largely upon his relations with Francesco da Carrara, since the distance between Verona and Padua by the indirect railway route is not fifty miles, and from Vicenza, another of Can Signorio's possessions, to Padua, is less than twenty miles. From 1365 to 1369 Can Signorio had been more or less actively in league with Francesco's enemies.<sup>5</sup> Even in March, 1372, he received a

<sup>1</sup> Fracassetti, II, 258, 441.

<sup>2</sup> Fracassetti, V, 344; II, 442; cf. *Opera*, 1581, p. 1023.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Verci, VII, 112. Elsewhere (XIV, 143-44) Verci tells of the great bell that he caused to be placed on the Clock Tower; of the retaining wall built along the Adigetto from the Portoni della Brà, in the heart of the city, to the Adige, with the cellars along it, to serve at need as granaries; and of how, by his own efforts and their influence upon others, he transformed and beautified his city of Vicenza.

<sup>4</sup> See Ruskin, *Stones of Venice*, III, chap. II: "The stateliest and most sumptuous of the three; it first arrests the eye of the stranger, and long detains it—a many-pinnacled pile surrounded by niches with statues of the warrior saints. It is beautiful, for it still belongs to the noble time, the latter part of the fourteenth century; but . . . its pride may well prepare us to learn that it was built for himself, in his own lifetime, by the man whose statue crowns it, Can Signorio della Scala. . . . Can Signorio was twice a fratricide, the last time when he lay upon his death-bed; his tomb bears upon its gables the images of six virtues—Faith, Hope, Charity, Prudence, and (I believe) Justice and Fortitude."

<sup>5</sup> Verci, XIV, 76, 81, 84, 86, 95, 98, 99, 104, 111, 113, 118, 127; Cittadella, I, 277, 281, 283. Much earlier, in December, 1359, he had taken refuge in Padua (Verci, VII, 110) after his assassination of Can Grande II (see below, p. 138). He was own nephew to Francesco da Carrara, since his father had married Francesco's sister, Taddea, in 1328 (Verci VII, 91).

large sum from Venice, then preparing war against Padua, on condition that the Republic might raise troops in his territories.<sup>1</sup> But by May, 1372, Can Signorio had seen a new light. To an embassy from Francesco, inquiring as to his intentions, he declared that he would not take sides, but nevertheless would be friendly to Francesco.<sup>2</sup> This was at the end of May, and about the same time he sent ambassadors to Louis, King of Hungary, Francesco's ally, to put all his means and power at the disposal of the king.<sup>3</sup> Early in June the Veronese applied to Venice for salt, but were refused, whereupon Francesco offered to let them have all they wanted for five years;<sup>4</sup> this evidently conciliated Can Signorio, for in July he replied to a Hungarian embassy that he would always be obedient to Louis, and serviceable to Francesco.<sup>5</sup> It is significant that the dukes of Bavaria and Austria, having made impossible demands of Can Signorio as a pretext for attacking him, were met with an unqualified refusal from Francesco in October, 1372, when they sought permission from him to conduct their invading troops through the pass of Valsugana, since, as he declared, there was good and firm friendship between Can Signorio and himself.<sup>6</sup> Can Signorio, it is true, took no active part in the war<sup>7</sup>—he loved building rather than fighting<sup>8</sup>—and we are told that Zaccaria da Modena<sup>9</sup> endeavored to have him transmit a letter of his to the Venetian government;<sup>10</sup> but there is no proof that the Lord of Verona was privy to its contents.

The relations between Can Signorio and Francesco must have grown increasingly intimate during these latter years, for on August 20, 1375,<sup>11</sup> a contract of marriage was drawn up in the former's palace at Verona between Francesco Novello and Taddea, daughter of Niccolò II, Marquis of Este, Ferrara, and Modena (1361-88).

<sup>1</sup> *R.I.S.*, XVII, 70, 72; *Vercl.* XIV, 159; *Cittadella*, I, 310.

<sup>2</sup> *R.I.S.*, XVII, 73-74.

<sup>3</sup> *R.I.S.*, XVII, 87-88; *Vercl.* XIV, 172; *Cittadella*, I, 309.

<sup>4</sup> *R.I.S.*, XVII, 89-90; *Vercl.* XIV, 172; *Cittadella*, I, 309.

<sup>5</sup> *R.I.S.*, XVII, 93, 96.

<sup>6</sup> *R.I.S.*, XVII, 108.

<sup>7</sup> *Vercl.* XIV, 208.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. p. 136, and note 3.

<sup>9</sup> See p. 134.

<sup>10</sup> *R.I.S.*, XVII, 188; *Vercl.* XIV, 223.

<sup>11</sup> The marriage itself did not take place till May 31, 1379.

Niccolò had married Can Signorio's sister Verde on May 19, 1362,<sup>1</sup> and Taddea (b. 1365) was the fruit of this union. In relation to the contract, Can Signorio not only acted as the maternal uncle of the bride, but also as the representative of her father.<sup>2</sup> There can be no question, then, that the projected marriage was entirely agreeable to the former, and this argues great friendliness at this time between himself and Francesco da Carrara.

That Can Signorio, his junior by perhaps fifteen years, might have visited Francesco at some time between the spring of 1373 and that of 1374, will, then, surprise no one.

3. Seeing that Boccaccio did not meet Petrarch till October, 1350, that he visited the latter at Padua in the spring of 1351, and that Petrarch was probably not in Verona after June, 1351,<sup>3</sup> he could not have visited Petrarch there; nor have we reason to suppose that he had any opportunity of meeting Can Signorio through any other agency than that of Petrarch.

We are now in a position to understand better Petrarch's polite phraseology, when he refers to Can Signorio as a "friend of ours" (*amicus noster*), and then immediately adds, "for all is common between us, even our friends" (*sunt enim nobis, ut reliqua, sic amici etiam communes*). The explanation sufficiently shows that Can Signorio was not the "common friend" that we have reason to suppose Francesco da Carrara to have been.

4. That Can Signorio was harder-hearted than Francesco da Carrara may be inferred from his slaying of his elder brother, Can

<sup>1</sup> Vercl, XIV, 25; VII, 106.

<sup>2</sup> See *Miscellanea di Storia Veneta* (ed. R. Dep. Veneta di Storia Patria), II, 9 (1903), 158-61. It is worth noting that Francesco, Niccolò, and Can Signorio had been leagued together as early as 1362 (Vercl, XIV, 27; Cittadella, I, 260). On February 9, 1371, Francesco orders the Podestà of Belluno to collect as many live kids as possible, and send them to Padua for a gift to Niccolò, who, on his journey back with Francesco and Petrarch from the funeral of Urban V in Bologna on January 3 (if we may trust Vercl, XIV, 150; *Documenti*, pp. 70-71), had expressed a wish for them.

There was cordial friendship between Niccolò and Petrarch. In April, 1370, Petrarch set out from Padua for Rome, but, on arriving at Ferrara, fell into a swoon, and was actually regarded as dead, but finally recovered. On this occasion he experienced great kindness from Niccolò (*Sen.* xiii. 17; *Opera*, 1581, p. 896). We have two letters from the poet to him, one dissuading him from taking part in tournaments (*Sen.* xi. 13), and another of consolation (*Sen.* xiii. 1).

<sup>3</sup> Fracassetti, I, 179; V, 539. Boccaccio may possibly have passed through Verona in December, 1351, on his way to the Tyrol, or in February, 1352, on his return journey (Körting, *Boccaccio's Leben und Werke*, pp. 193-95, 275); but Petrarch had left there in June, 1351, never to return (*Fam.* xi. 6, 7; Fracassetti, III, 8).



Grande II, in 1359,<sup>1</sup> from his imprisonment of another brother, Paolo Alboino, joint ruler with himself, in 1365, and his murdering of the latter in 1375.<sup>2</sup> The chronicler, Andrea Gataro, tells us that, feeling himself sick unto death, Can Signorio wrote to Francesco da Carrara, asking him whether he would advise that the lordship of Verona be left to the legitimate heir, Paolo Alboino, or to his own bastard sons, Bartolomeo and Antonio. Francesco replied that by leaving Verona to his brother, he would acquire great honor in this world, and glory in the next, and that, by way of compensation, he could leave Vicenza, and others of his possessions, to his sons. Thereupon Can Signorio instantly summoned four trusty henchmen, and thus commanded them: "Go at once to Peschiera, where you will find my brother, Paolo Alboino, and slay him; do this, and I will make you all rich, seeing that my object is to leave my sons lords." On their return, the murderers reported that they had obeyed his orders. "Then," said he, "I shall die content," proceeded to make his will, and three days later, to die, October 19, 1375, at the age of thirty-five.<sup>3</sup>

If the foregoing identifications are accepted, they will serve at once to throw a little additional light upon two famous Italian rulers of the later fourteenth century, and at the same time to illustrate how their respective reactions, upon the reading of the story, corresponded to their historical characters—Francesco yielding to the sweetness of Griselda's nature, and Can Signorio refusing to believe that such a nature was possible.

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<sup>1</sup> Verci, VII, 108.

<sup>2</sup> Verci, VII, 113.

<sup>3</sup> *R.I.S.*, XVII, 216. Verci (VII, 110, 111) calls him malevolent, treacherous, abominable (*cattivo, traditore, scellerato*). Suspecting a conspiracy against himself in 1365, he had many people of consequence slain, and shortly after imposed new and oppressive taxes, and seized for his own use the revenues of various ecclesiastical benefices in Verona and Vicenza (Verci, VII, 111). He had caused his sons to be proclaimed as his successors on October 15, 1375 (Verci, VII, 114), the day before he sent assassins to Paolo Alboino. They came to no good ends: Bartolomeo (b. 1360) was assassinated by his brother's orders on July 12, 1381, and Antonio (b. 1362) was expelled from his dominions by Gian Galeazzo Visconti on October 18, 1387, dying in exile September 3, 1388, perhaps of poison (Verci, VII, 114-16). With him ended the rule of the Scaligers, his son, Can Francesco, being poisoned at Ravenna a few years later by order of Gian Galeazzo (Verci, VII, 116).





## LITERARY RELATIONSHIPS OF GUY DE MAUPASSANT

Balzac remarks disparagingly of his native city, Tours, where the best French is spoken, that it was one of the least literary cities in France.<sup>1</sup> In like manner Guy de Maupassant, acclaimed as the master of a perfect French prose style, was to an astonishing degree unversed in literature. "No mind was less bookish," observes M. Faguet. "When he published at the beginning of *Pierre et Jean*, perhaps in order to enlarge the volume, a brief critical study, he proved nothing except that he had read nothing."<sup>2</sup> Amid the Sunday afternoon discussions at the house of Flaubert, and at the famous "jeudis" of Zola, Maupassant was taciturn, and made the impression of a brawny athlete with little interest in writing. More than one person who met this "taureau triste"<sup>3</sup>—as Taine called him familiarly—before his reputation was established, was astonished to learn later of his ability as a writer. "Il n'aimait point à parler littérature," was his excuse.<sup>4</sup>

In this way that *vision directe*, unobscured by the medium of books, which the Goncourt brothers had heralded, Guy de Maupassant actually possessed.<sup>5</sup> Such a perfect realist did he thus become that, to quote M. Faguet again, "le lecteur ne sait pas, et c'est ce qu'il faut, quand il lit Maupassant, si c'est de l'art de Maupassant, ou seulement de la vérité, qu'il a le goût."<sup>6</sup>

We may confidently expect, therefore, that any important literary influence upon Maupassant will be exerted by means of oral

<sup>1</sup> *Le Curé de Tours*, in *Œuvres de Balzac* (Calmann Lévy ed. [1892]), p. 193. In his correspondence Balzac usually speaks of Touraine in terms of deepest affection.

<sup>2</sup> Émile Faguet, in *Revue Bleue*, LII (July 15, 1893).

<sup>3</sup> Victor Giraud, *Essai sur Taine* (5<sup>e</sup> ed.; Paris, 1912), p. 106, n. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Letter of Édouard Rod to Monsieur le baron A. Lumbruso, October 6, 1904 (A. Lumbruso, *Souvenirs sur Maupassant* [1905], p. 374). René Doumic, in *Revue des Deux Mondes*, CXX (1893), 194, says: "Tout ce qui est d'ordre intellectuel, œuvre ou conquête de l'esprit, lui échappe. Et comme il arrive, ce qu'il ne comprend pas, il le nie. . . . Et quand Rodolphe de Salins continue exposant ses théories sur la destinée humaine, à savoir que la pensée est dans la création un accident à jamais regrettable, et que la terre a été faite pour les animaux non pour les hommes, décidément par sa bouche c'est Maupassant qui parle."

<sup>5</sup> E. Maynial, "La Composition dans les romans de Maupassant," in *Revue Bleue* LXXII (October 31, 1903), 563. See Edmond et Jules de Goncourt, *Préfaces et manifestes littéraires* (Paris, 1880), p. 13.

<sup>6</sup> E. Faguet, *loc. cit.*

transmission, so familiar in the history of the primitive ballad and folk-tale. To Alfred de Musset he is indebted hardly more than for the inspiration of juvenile madrigals and sonnets composed at the *lycée* of Rouen.<sup>1</sup> Possibly also traces of that quality, which Professor Irving Babbitt calls "the Romantic art of impassioned recollection," which was so prominent a characteristic of Musset, may be discovered in the works of both Flaubert and his pupil, Maupassant. At the conclusion of the *Éducation sentimentale*, Frédéric remarks: "C'est là ce que nous avons eu de meilleur!" Deslaurier replies, in similar reminiscent vein, "Oui, peut-être bien? C'est là ce que nous avons eu de meilleur!" In *L'Épave*, Maupassant concludes with a sob as the memory of the former beauty of the heroine comes back to him: "Ah! celle d'autrefois . . . celle de l'épave . . . quelle créature . . . divine!"<sup>2</sup> In *Regret*, Monsieur Saval weeps as he thinks of the happiness which was once in his reach and which he had failed to grasp.<sup>3</sup>

Despite these resemblances, it is safe to assert that Maupassant's indebtedness to Musset was not excessive. His imitation of Edgar Allan Poe was slighter still and has been overestimated by a few writers. Notwithstanding the protestations of Mme de Maupassant, most critics are disposed to accept as conclusive the argument that stories like *Le Horla*, so far from having any foreign origin, are merely the faithful journal of an author whose reason was tottering.<sup>4</sup> Where Maupassant's imitation of Poe seems perfectly clear is in an unedited story called *Le Tic*. Instead of describing the father and daughter, about whom the narrative revolves, Maupassant says simply: "Ils me firent l'effet, tout de suite, de personnages d'Edgar Poé. . . ." Then follows a tale of the daughter's rescue from the grave, quite in the manner of the *Premature Burial* and the *Fall of the House of Usher*.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> E. Maynial, *La Vie et l'œuvre de Guy de Maupassant* (Paris, 1907), p. 82.

<sup>2</sup> *L'Épave*, in *La Petite Roque*, p. 92. The Louis Conard edition (1908-1910) has been used for references to Maupassant's works.

<sup>3</sup> *Regret*, in *Miss Harriet*, pp. 259 ff.

<sup>4</sup> E. Maynial, *op. cit.*, pp. 248-251. See Henry James in *Fortnightly Review*, XLIX (1888), 376: ". . . These last things range from *Le Horla* (which is not a specimen of the author's best vein—the only occasion on which he has the weakness of imitation is when he strikes us as emulating Edgar Poe). . . ." To parody the language of the late Mr. James, this very inaccurate statement is certainly not a specimen of the critic's best vein.

<sup>5</sup> *Le Tic*, *Œuvres Posthumes*, I, 227-234.

This story affords apparently the one instance where Maupassant mentions Poe. A more significant influence upon Maupassant, exerted of course through the medium of books, is that of Balzac. As Maupassant remarks, speaking for his realistic brethren, it is "Balzac que nous citons tous, quelles que soient nos tendances, parce que son esprit est aussi varié qu'étendu. . . ."<sup>1</sup>

Despite the usual opinion of critics that the direct influence of Balzac upon Maupassant was slight, the two authors clearly had much in common. If we have M. Faguet's authority that Maupassant read nothing at all, we also have his authority that Balzac read no other author than Walter Scott. It is not surprising, then, that Maupassant had Balzac's passion for observing life at first hand, for recording his impressions in carefully taken notes, for a realism which was the farthest possible remove from the classical copying of Virgil and other "perfect" models. On the other hand, if Balzac was classical in his exclusive study of man, and all that pertains to mankind, Maupassant flaunted the classical motto of Terence: "Je tâche que rien de ce qui touche les hommes ne me soit étranger."<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, if Taine finds the *Comédie humaine* a vast study of humanity from the zoölogical point of view, the works of Maupassant lay no less emphasis upon the animalism of man. There is even in the *Contes* and in the *Nouvelles* far more of the lingering Romanticism of Balzac than is commonly supposed.

Occasionally it is not difficult to discover resemblances of detail between the writers. *Bel-Ami* has been recognized as a modernized *Lucien de Rubempré*. It seems to me also that Balzac's story entitled *Adieu*<sup>3</sup> may well have furnished Maupassant with a suggestion for his *conte* entitled *Berthe*.<sup>4</sup> *Adieu* concerns a girl named Stéphanie, reduced to insanity, who finds as a companion Geneviève, an idiotic peasant girl. Geneviève had been loved by a mason named Dallot, who married her for her dowry. For a time she was extremely happy, for love had awakened in her heart a great response. Then Dallot deserted her for another girl who possessed two quarters of

<sup>1</sup> Réponse à M. Albert Wolff, in *Mlle Fifi*, p. 284.

<sup>2</sup> Réponse à M. Wolff, *op. cit.*, p. 283.

<sup>3</sup> *Œuvres Complètes* (Calmann Lévy ed. [1892]), in volume entitled *Louis Lambert*, p. 234.

<sup>4</sup> In volume entitled *Yvette*, pp. 251-269.

land more than she, and Geneviève lost what little intelligence love had developed in her. Maupassant's *Berthe* concerns an idiot girl with a fair dowry who is greatly benefited by marriage and declines immediately after she is deserted by her husband.

Often the influence of Balzac upon Maupassant is exerted through the intermediary of Flaubert, as in the case of the famous doctrine of "impersonality," formulated by Flaubert, adopted by Maupassant, but probably inspired by a reading of Balzac's novels. A curious illustration of this second-hand transmission is found in the imitation of an incident of Balzac's *Honorine*.<sup>1</sup> In the midst of his garden Count Octave has a magnificent basin, swarming with goldfish. When he is in a pensive mood, he goes there to brood over Honorine, who has deserted him. It had been as he stood over the basin with Honorine, then a girl of seventeen, and had thrown bread to the fishes, that he had spoken his first words of love to her. This episode, utilized by Flaubert, reappears in *Bel-Ami* when Georges Du Roy accompanies Suzanne Walter to the basin in the conservatory to throw bread to the fishes and to plan an elopement.<sup>2</sup>

It is not my intention, however, to enter thoroughly into the subject of Balzac's influence here. Even briefer mention will be allowed Maupassant's story entitled *L'Endormeuse*, which appeared in September, 1889,<sup>3</sup> and concerns a suicide club which may have been modeled on that described by Robert Louis Stevenson in the *New Arabian Nights* (1882).

If Maupassant was acquainted with few authors through their books, his obligations to two life-long friends of his mother Laure and his uncle Alfred le Poittevin are well known. Mme de Maupassant declares that one of these friends, Louis Bouilhet, was prevented only by an early death from making her son a poet.<sup>4</sup> The other, Gustave Flaubert, instructed him in the art of the novelist.

In his essay on *Le Roman*, which appeared as a preface to *Pierre et Jean*, Maupassant has described the lessons in the art of composition which he received from his masters. First, Bouilhet taught

<sup>1</sup> *Honorine*, in *Le Colonel Chabert*, pp. 119, 128.

<sup>2</sup> *Bel-Ami*, pp. 510, 511.

<sup>3</sup> In *La Main Gauche*, pp. 241 ff.

<sup>4</sup> E. Maynial, *op. cit.*, p. 44 (citation from A. Albalat, on Mme de Maupassant, in *Le Journal des Débats*, December 12, 1903).

him an appreciation of perfect form in verse, impressing upon him the fact that one short but flawless poem may confer immortality upon its author. After some two years, Bouilhet's mantle fell upon Flaubert, who insisted upon faultless, classic prose, correcting tirelessly Maupassant's compositions.

The influence of Flaubert upon his pupil is a subject treated most thoroughly in the forthcoming University of Chicago thesis of Miss Agnes R. Riddell, so that only one or two observations will be attempted here. The emphasis laid by Flaubert upon details is evident in the following often-quoted passage from Maupassant's essay on *Le Roman*:

Quand vous passez, me disait-il, devant un épicier assis sur sa porte, devant un concierge qui fume sa pipe, devant une station de fiacres, montrez-moi cet épicier et ce concierge, leur pose, toute leur apparence physique contenant aussi, indiquée par l'adresse de l'image, toute leur nature morale, de façon à ce que je ne les confonde avec aucun autre épicier ou avec aucun autre concierge, et faites-moi voir, par un seul mot, en quoi un cheval de fiacre ne ressemble pas aux cinquante autres qui le suivent et le précèdent.<sup>1</sup>

The extent to which such "leçons d'école" influenced the style of Maupassant has already been indicated to a certain degree by a number of critics, notably Brunetière. It remained for Miss Riddell to demonstrate that Maupassant, not satisfied with learning the literary methods of Flaubert, was inclined to adopt also some of his characters and episodes. One illustration of this practice is mentioned here, in anticipation of Miss Riddell.

The rendezvous of *Bel-Ami* with Mme Walter in the Church of the Trinity suggests strongly that of Léon Dupuis with Emma Bovary in a cathedral. Both Du Roy and Léon arrive ahead of time—Léon discovering that it was nine o'clock by looking at the cuckoo clock of the hairdresser; Du Roy, that it was three o'clock by consulting his watch. To while away the time, Léon walks three city blocks, and decides to return. Du Roy, also, walks slowly along the dock, until he concludes that it would be better to return. Both wait impatiently for the arrival of their lady-loves, Léon being startled by a rustling of silk over the flag-stone; Du Roy, by the noise of a dress. "C'était elle!" announces Flaubert. "C'était elle!" echoes Maupassant. "Léon se leva et courut à sa rencontre."

<sup>1</sup> *Le Roman*, in *Pierre et Jean*, p. xxiv.

As for Du Roy, "Il se leva, s'avance vivement." Emma and Mme Walter seek refuge from temptation in prayer. "Emma prayed, or rather attempted to pray," we are told, "hoping that some sudden resolution would descend to her from heaven." As for Mme Walter, "Then she tried to pray. With a superhuman invocation she attempted to call upon God, and, her body vibrating, her soul distraught, she cried 'Pity!' to the sky." Emma filled her eyes with the splendors of the tabernacle and breathed its incense, in order to fortify herself; but her efforts only increased the tumult of her heart. Mme Walter shut her eyes in order not to see Du Roy, endeavored to drive his image from her mind, but instead of the celestial apparition for which she hoped, she perceived always the curly moustache of the young man.<sup>1</sup>

I shall further venture the statement, upon my own responsibility, that Flaubert's influence manifested itself even upon those feelings which we are accustomed to regard as absolutely instinctive with Maupassant, such as his repugnance for death, for old age, for the gray hair which is the token of the approaching end. Writing more than a decade before Maupassant's *Fini*, *L'Épave*, and *Fort comme la mort*, Flaubert in his *Éducation sentimentale* makes Frédéric Moreau observe with consternation the gray hair of Mme Arnoux in the strong light of a lamp. "It was like a blow full in his chest," Flaubert comments.<sup>2</sup> Equally instinctive with Maupassant seems that feeling of fear, of unreasoning fear, "la peur de la peur," which finally mastered his reason. Nevertheless, we may discover evidences of even this characteristic in the narrative of the duel in the *Éducation sentimentale*. Frédéric Moreau is terribly afraid that he will be afraid. "Une angoisse abominable le saisit à l'idée d'avoir peur sur le terrain," says Flaubert.<sup>3</sup> Maupassant, imitating this passage in *Un Lâche*, makes the Viscount Gontran-Joseph de Signoles find this fear overwhelming: "Et ce doute l'envahit, cette inquiétude, cette épouvante; si une force plus puissante que sa volonté, domina-

<sup>1</sup> *Madame Bovary* (L. Conard ed.), pp. 326-329; *Bel-Ami*, pp. 397-405.

<sup>2</sup> *Éducation sentimentale*, p. 604.

<sup>3</sup> *Éducation sentimentale*, p. 323. Miss Riddell notes the resemblance between the duels in *Éducation sentimentale* and in *Bel-Ami*, pp. 237 ff. The similarity between *Un Lâche* and the pages cited from *Bel-Ami* was observed by E. Maynial, "La Composition dans les romans de Maupassant," in *Revue Bleue*, LXXII (November 7, 1903), 607.



trice, irrésistible, le domptait, qu'arriverait-il? Oui, que pouvait-il arriver?"<sup>1</sup>

Furthermore, emphasis should be laid upon the fact that the influence of Flaubert upon Maupassant, very noticeable in Maupassant's earlier novels, such as *Une Vie* and *Bel-Ami*, afterward diminished considerably. When Lemaitre, adopting the opinion of Maupassant's perspicacious publisher, Havard, notes that *Mont-Oriol* (1887) is a transitional novel, because of the emotional and dramatic elements it contains, he is actually noting a decline in the influence of Flaubert.<sup>2</sup> When he remarks that in *Pierre et Jean* (1888) the transformation of the author's manner is complete, for the whole interest centers in the dramatic struggle between the guilty mother and the inquisitorial son, he really signalizes the passing of the influences of Flaubert.<sup>3</sup>

On the whole, Maupassant does not appear to have been influenced greatly by authors of the naturalistic school, aside from Flaubert. For Zola, whose lack of practical sense he ridiculed,<sup>4</sup> whom he called "absolument fou" because of his colossal conceit,<sup>5</sup> and to whose followers he was an object of suspicion for a time because of his supposed lack of devotion to the naturalistic cause,<sup>6</sup> his feelings were perhaps as friendly as for any of the other realists. It was at Zola's suggestion that Maupassant contributed to the *Soirées de Médan*, conforming readily to the Decameron-like framework which was proposed and preserving the volume from obscurity by his *Boule de Suif*.<sup>7</sup>

Suspicious for a time of Alphonse Daudet,<sup>8</sup> Maupassant never appears to have become intimate with him. Nevertheless, early in

<sup>1</sup> *Un Lâche*, in *Contes du Jour et de la Nuit*, p. 113. Cf. *Bel-Ami*, p. 238.

<sup>2</sup> *Revue Bleue*, XLIII, June 29, 1889 (3d series, No. 26).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* Brunetière, adopting a different point of view, concludes that Maupassant, once he has passed the early stage of excessive imitation of his master, surpasses all his contemporaries of the naturalistic school, being more realistic than Flaubert himself (*Revue des Deux Mondes*, LXXXIX [1888, 3d series], 694, 696). Havard's opinion of *Mont-Oriol* is quoted by Lombroso, *op. cit.*, p. 417: "Vous donnez là, avec une puissance inouïe, une nouvelle note que j'avais devinée en vous depuis longtemps. J'avais senti ces accents de tendresse et d'émotion suprême dans *Au Printemps*, *Miss Harriet*, *Yvette*, et ailleurs."

<sup>4</sup> Letter to Flaubert, in *Boule de Suif*, p. cvii (July 5, 1878).

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. cxx (April 24, 1879).

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. cxix (February 26, 1879).

<sup>7</sup> E. Maynial, *op. cit.*, pp. 105, 106.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. n. 3.

his career, Maupassant aligned himself with Daudet and the other realists who depicted the lower strata of life. He thus became for a time one of the most ardent apologists for "bas-fondmanie," which he claimed was only a natural reaction against excessive idealism.<sup>1</sup>

Despite the ardor of the young convert, there were at first two opposite tendencies in Maupassant. We find him, on the one hand, insisting that the novelist must "faire le monde tel qu'il le voit, lever les voiles de grâce et d'honnêteté,"<sup>2</sup> and attacking even more violently "la sentimentalité ronflante des romantiques."<sup>3</sup> On the other hand in *Mlle Fifi*, as well as in *Boule de Suif*, he really adopts the favorite Romantic theme of the courtesan, ennobled by love and other lofty sentiments—the theme of *Marion Delorme*, revived in *La Dame aux camélias*. "Des filles épousées deviennent en peu de temps de remarquables femmes du monde,"<sup>4</sup> pleads Maupassant.

It was Daudet who brought him thoroughly to the true realistic point of view. After reading Daudet's *Les Femmes d'artistes*, which he calls "ce petit livre, si cruel et si beau,"<sup>5</sup> we find Maupassant speaking with a certain disgust of the "fréquentation constante de cette race de dindes qu'on nomme les modèles."<sup>6</sup> In imitation of Daudet, he published, in December, 1883, his story entitled *Le Modèle*, dealing with the frequent marriages between painters and their models. Henceforth we shall find him, like the other naturalists, tending to depict the horrible side of life for its own sake, without veneer or idealization.<sup>7</sup>

Had Jules de Goncourt lived, it is impossible to predict what his relations with Guy de Maupassant would have been. Certainly they had much in common, from their aristocratic birth to the bromides and *douches* to which both were obliged to submit in their respective sanitariums. The surviving brother of Jules de Goncourt,

<sup>1</sup> E. Maynial, *op. cit.* p. 282.

<sup>2</sup> Réponse à M. Francisque Sarcey, in *Mlle Fifi*, p. 277.

<sup>3</sup> *Les Soirées de Médan—Comment ce livre a été fait*, in *Boule de Suif*, p. 82.

<sup>4</sup> Réponse à Sarcey, *op. cit.*, p. 279.

<sup>5</sup> *Le Modèle*, in *Le Rosier de Madame Husson*, p. 75.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 76: "Elle a risqué le tout pour le tout. Était-elle sincère? Aimait-elle Jean? Sait-on jamais cela? Qui donc pourra déterminer d'une façon précise ce qu'il y a d'après, et ce qu'il y a de réel dans les actes des femmes? . . . Elles sont emportées, criminelles, dévouées, admirables, et ignobles, pour obéir à d'insaisissables émotions. . . ."

Edmond, delighted in making carping criticisms of Maupassant, and spent much of his time wondering why he was considered a simple gentleman and amateur writer, while Maupassant was taken seriously.<sup>1</sup>

It must be granted that the direct influence of the philosopher Taine upon Maupassant, as far as it existed, was exerted principally through his books. In the latter part of his life, Taine became one of Maupassant's warm admirers and is said to have exclaimed, on finishing *Le Champ d'Oliviers*, "Cela, c'est de l'Eschyle."<sup>2</sup> However, sufficient attention has not yet been paid by critics to the fact that the real intimacy between the two writers began only in 1888, after an introduction at Aix-les-Bains in Savoy, through the intermediary of Dr. Cazalis.<sup>3</sup> Previously to that time it seems that Maupassant had observed Taine only from a distance, as when he described him attending the afternoon receptions of Flaubert, "le regard caché derrière ses lunettes, l'allure timide," but with "son œil perçant de philosophe."<sup>4</sup>

The fact that this acquaintance was slight during the period of Maupassant's greatest activity points strongly to the conclusion that Taine's influence may have been slighter than M. Giraud would estimate.<sup>5</sup> To answer his oft-cited statement, it may suffice to call attention to a few well-established facts. There is evidence that it was Flaubert, rather than Taine, who persuaded Maupassant to abandon verse-writing and become a novelist. It is true that when Maupassant speaks of "ces petits faits insignifiants . . . qui forment le fond même, le trame de l'existence,"<sup>6</sup> he approaches closely the language of the Preface to the *Intelligence*. However, on the whole, Brunetière is correct in tracing Maupassant's attention to what has been called "l'humble vérité" to Flaubert rather than to Taine.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> E. Maynial, *op. cit.*, pp. 207 ff.

<sup>2</sup> A. Lumbroso, *op. cit.*, p. 280.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> V. Giraud, *loc. cit.*

<sup>5</sup> V. Giraud, *op. cit.*, p. 189: "À tous ces écrivains, dont quelques-uns ont débuté par des vers et qui, peut-être, auraient pu continuer dans cette voie, il a persuadé que la forme du roman leur fournissait le meilleur et le plus moderne emploi de leur talent; . . . il leur a appris à regarder autour d'eux et même au-dessous d'eux, à ne rien dédaigner de ce que l'un d'eux a appelé 'l'humble vérité.' . . ."

<sup>6</sup> *Mlle Perle*, in *La Petite Roque*, p. 135.

<sup>7</sup> *Revue des Deux Mondes*, LXX (1885, 3d series), 215. Cf. *Mademoiselle Cocotte*, in *Clair de Lune*, pp. 128-129: "Les choses les plus simples, les plus humbles, sont parfois celles qui nous mordent le plus au cœur."

When Maupassant notes that the door of the *Folies-Bergères* is "une porte matelassée à battants garnis de cuir," or that at the theater one sees of the persons seated in the *loges* only "leur tête et leur poitrine," he is, declares Brunetière, following the regular procedure of *Madame Bovary*, *Éducation sentimentale* and *Bouvard et Pécuchet*. Furthermore, so far as the question of studying the lower strata of humanity was concerned, we find Maupassant and Taine absolutely at variance. In his *Réponse à M. Francisque Sarcey*, Maupassant quotes the following passage from a letter from Taine, "dont je ne partage point l'opinion":

. . . Vous peignez des paysans, des petits bourgeois, des ouvriers, des étudiants et des filles. Vous peindrez sans doute un jour la classe cultivée, la haute bourgeoisie, ingénieurs, médecins, professeurs, grands industriels et commerçants.

A mon sens, la civilisation est une puissance. Un homme né dans l'aisance, héritier de trois ou quatre générations honnêtes, laborieuses et rangées, a plus de chances d'être probe, délicat et instruit. L'honneur et l'esprit sont toujours plus ou moins des plantes de serre.

Cette doctrine est bien aristocratique, mais elle est expérimentale. . . .<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, the affinity between the determinism of Taine and the fatalism<sup>2</sup> of Maupassant may well have been due to indirect influences, if not to a certain similarity of temperament which manifested itself toward the close of the lives of each.<sup>3</sup>

The relationship between Maupassant and Paul Bourget, who was his friend and occasionally his travelling companion, seems important. There is an incontestable connection between the plots of Maupassant's *Fort comme la Mort* and Bourget's *Le Fantôme*, due to oral transmission if we are to accept the story published by Lumbroso.<sup>4</sup> Mme Lecomte du Nouy, it appears, when she deserted Bourget to

<sup>1</sup> *Mlle Fiça*, p. 276.

<sup>2</sup> "Les gens calmes nés sans instincts violents, vivent honnêtes, par nécessité. Le devoir est facile à ceux que ne torturent jamais les désirs enragés. Je vois des petites bourgeoises au sang froid, aux mœurs rigides, d'un esprit moyen et d'un cœur modéré, pousser des cris d'indignation quand elles apprennent les fautes des femmes tombées. . . .

"Mais chez ceux-là que le hasard a fait passionnés, madame, les sens sont invincibles. Pouvez-vous arrêter le vent, pouvez-vous arrêter la mer démontée?" From *L'Enfant*, in the collection entitled *Clair de Lune*, p. 233.

<sup>3</sup> "Peut-être aussi pourrait-on noter que vers la fin Guy de Maupassant—tout comme Hippolyte Taine—s'attendrissait singulièrement; mais dans ce dernier fait, on pourrait voir plutôt l'action des mêmes causes extérieures (le malaise social, l'expérience grandissante de la vie) qu'une influence réciproque." A. Lumbroso, *op. cit.*, p. 282.

<sup>4</sup> A. Lumbroso, *op. cit.*, pp. 332, 333.

become intimate with Maupassant, communicated to him the plot of *Le Fantôme*, which Bourget had outlined to her, but did not utilize until 1900-1901. Bourget's *Un Cœur de Femme* and Maupassant's *Notre Cœur* have also related themes, possibly for the reason suggested in Lumbroso's valuable volume, that both authors have taken for their heroine Mme Lecomte du Nouy.<sup>1</sup> An attempt will now be made to determine, more clearly than has been done heretofore, the obligations of Maupassant to Bourget. In drawing our conclusions it should be borne in mind that while Maupassant borrowed heavily from other writers, mainly Flaubert, Bourget, who possessed the advantage of a wider range of reading, was no less an offender. Hence, while seeking to discover traces of Bourget's influence upon Maupassant, we should be mentally prepared to find the source current flowing from Maupassant to Bourget.

Let us consider first the most important resemblances between *Le Fantôme* and *Fort comme la Mort*. Maupassant's novel relates the love of the painter Olivier Bertin for the Countess de Guilleroy. When Annette, the daughter of the Countess, reaches maturity, she reveals a startling likeness to what her mother had been when Bertin first met her. The painter falls in love with Annette, guilty though he feels in so doing.

This theme finds practically a twofold version in Bourget's *Le Fantôme*. M. d'Andiguier, who had blamelessly loved Antoinette Duvernay for nearly fifteen years,<sup>2</sup> nine years after her death became enamored of the daughter Éveline, who made the deceased lady seem very present to him, "so great was the resemblance in silhouette, in gestures, in physiognomy."<sup>3</sup> It develops later that Malclerc, who marries Éveline, had previously been the paramour of Antoinette.<sup>4</sup> It is the remarkable likeness of daughter to mother which attracts him irresistibly to Éveline.<sup>5</sup>

There is a serious objection to accepting the story published by Lumbroso of Maupassant's indebtedness to Bourget for this theme. As early as January, 1883, a full year before Bourget wrote his first published story in England, *L'Irréparable*, there appeared in *Gil-Blas*

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 334. Cf. E. Maynial, *op. cit.*, p. 203, and n. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Paul Bourget, *Le Fantôme*, in *Œuvres Complètes*, VI (Plon ed. [1906]), 153.

<sup>3</sup> See also *ibid.*, p. 177.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 210.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 229.

Maupassant's *M. Jocaste*, which apparently had no connection with the *Jocaste* of Anatole France (1879). It was the story of Pierre Martel, who had loved a young married woman. Years afterward he met the daughter, and fell in love with her at once because of her resemblance to the dead mother. "It was she! the other! the one who was dead!"<sup>1</sup> Her age was exactly the same as her mother's had been; hers were the same eyes, hair, figure, and voice as her mother had had. Pierre Martel's passion became uncontrollable.

The only important dissimilarity in the two stories is that Bourget's *Éveline* is not the daughter of Malclerc, whereas in *M. Jocaste* the case is probably different. The title chosen by Maupassant, *M. Jocaste*, is guaranty that the more repulsive—and "realistic"—version of the story goes back to earliest antiquity.

Even more suggestive of the subject of Bourget's *Le Fantôme* is Maupassant's *Fini*, which appeared in *Le Gaulois*, July, 1885. The Count de Lormerin had been in love with Lise. Twenty-five years later he met the daughter, who looked exactly like her mother at the same age, only younger, fresher, more childlike.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, Malclerc finds *Éveline* younger, with rounder cheeks, and animated by more childlike gaiety than Antoinette.<sup>3</sup> Lormerin is seized with

<sup>1</sup> *M. Jocaste*, in the collection entitled *Mlle Fifi*, p. 263.

There are also cases in Maupassant's earlier works where the man is intimate with the mother, and marries the daughter later, without regard to any resemblance between the two. In *Bel-Ami*, Mme Walter is the mistress of Du Roy, who afterward elopes with her daughter Suzanne. In one of Maupassant's later stories, *Hautot Père et Fils* (*La Main Gauche*, p. 73), the rôles are reversed. "Mam'zelle" Donet, who has been the mistress of Hautot père, is about to have the same relation with Hautot fils, a situation comparable to that in Zola's *La Curée*.

Incest is a frequent theme with Maupassant. See *L'Ermite*, in *La Petite Roque*, p. 106: "J'avais fait, sans le vouloir, pis que ces êtres ignobles. J'étais entré dans la couche de ma fille." In *Le Port* (*La Main Gauche*, p. 216): "Il la sentait sur lui, enlacée à lui, chaude et terrifiée, sa sœur!"

The preoccupation of Maupassant for the fate of outcasts from society is one of his noteworthy characteristics. Cf. also *Un Fils* (*Contes de la Bécasse*, pp. 195-213).

<sup>2</sup> *Fini*, in *Œuvres Posthumes*, I, 241.

<sup>3</sup> Paul Bourget, *op. cit.*, p. 229. Six years or more before the publication of *Le Fantôme*, there appeared also an expurgated American version of the story, entitled *The Honorable Peter Stirling*, by Paul Leicester Ford (Copyright, Henry Holt & Co., 1894). When a young man, Peter had asked the hand of Miss Pierce after a very brief acquaintance (p. 29), having been especially attracted by her slate-colored eyes (p. 20). Years later he met the daughter Leonore, whom he rescued from a runaway accident. Amid the excitement of the occasion, his most vivid impression was that "the girl had slate-colored eyes!" (p. 202). As a matter of fact, she resembled her father Watts D'Alloi more than she did her mother. "But to Peter," the author observes, "it was merely the renewal of his dream" (p. 204).

The subject is treated also by Maurice Donnay, in *L'Autre Danger* (Paris, 1906). Cf. A. Lombroso, *op. cit.*, p. 333, n. 2. In Act III, scene 11, we learn that Freydlères, who



an irresistible desire to embrace the girl and whisper into her ear, "Bonjour, Lison."

It is true that in *Cruelle Énigme* (1885)<sup>1</sup> Bourget speaks of the kind of melancholy inspired by the spectacle of a mother of fifty, to whom her daughter of twenty-five bears such a striking resemblance that "l'une se trouve ainsi présenter le spectre anticipé de la vieillesse de l'autre." Yet the palm for the fully developed story of the man who loves the daughter because of her extraordinary resemblance to the mother, seems clearly to belong more to Maupassant than to Bourget.

The main subject of *Le Fantôme* is not the only thing which Bourget borrows from Maupassant in order to make double use of it. He apparently does as much with Maupassant's favorite episode, the unhappy discovery of old letters and souvenirs. M. d'Andigui, after the death of Antoinette Duvernay, finds an envelope of white leather, tied with ribbons, on which Mme Duvernay has written: "For my dear M. d'Andigui, who will destroy the envelope *just as it is*. . . ."<sup>2</sup> After a moral struggle, he complies with the wishes of the deceased. All is not well, however, for in a short time Éveline Malclerc discovers her husband, after perusing in distracted fashion a bundle of old letters, loading his revolver to commit suicide.<sup>3</sup> She rushes to D'Andigui for counsel, and matters are patched up for a time, Malclerc delivering his old correspondence with Antoinette into the hands of D'Andigui. One day, unfortunately, Éveline succeeds in prying into the drawer where D'Andigui had locked up the letters.<sup>4</sup> In the catastrophe that follows both Malclerc and Éveline would prefer to die, were it not for the premature birth of a son, which gives them something to live for.

Bourget also made use of this episode in an earlier novel, *André Cornélis* (1887), in which the influence of a variety of writers, notably the authors of *David Copperfield* and of *Hamlet*, is apparent. The central problem is intended as a modern parallel to *Hamlet*,<sup>5</sup> with a

later weds Madeleine Jadain, has been the lover of her mother. A strong physical resemblance of Madeleine to her mother is hinted at in Act II, scene 3, but this feature of the plot is not emphasized.

<sup>1</sup> *Œuvres Complètes*, I, 5.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 195.

<sup>3</sup> Paul Bourget, *op. cit.*, p. 182.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 352-54.

<sup>5</sup> *André Cornélis* (*Œuvres Complètes*, I, 312).



soliloquy of the hero on the question "to be or not to be," his hand on the trigger of a pistol,<sup>1</sup> with a nineteenth-century substitute for the players, who performed before the guilty stepfather,<sup>2</sup> with André as the avenger of his father's foul and most unnatural murder,<sup>3</sup> his faltering resolution being occasionally awakened by some startling event.<sup>4</sup> Borrowing an idea from Maupassant, Bourget makes of the letters of André's father, or rather of the room in which André read them, the ghost which summoned the hero to action. "C'était comme si le fantôme de l'assassiné fut sorti de son tombeau pour me supplier de tenir la promesse de vengeance jurée tant de fois à sa mémoire."<sup>5</sup> Unlike D'Andigui, he has not obeyed the entreaty of the dying woman who would have him burn the letters, in order to spare him the suspicions which they have engendered in her.<sup>6</sup> The evidence which is thus produced results in André's own unhappiness, if also in the punishment of his father's assassin.

A variation of the episode is found in *Le Disciple*,<sup>7</sup> when Charlotte de Jussat, forcing the lock, goes through the papers of Greslou. She declares: "J'ai été trop punie, puisque j'ai lu dans ces pages ce que j'y ai lu."

Bourget is probably under obligations for this theme to Maupassant, for whom the subject of old letters and souvenirs apparently had a horrible fascination, and who in turn doubtless derived his suggestion from two episodes in *Madame Bovary*. "Oh! ne touchez jamais à ce meuble, à ce cimetière, des correspondances d'autrefois, si vous tenez à la vie!"<sup>8</sup> he exclaims in *Suicides*. In *Une Vie*,<sup>9</sup> the baron Simon-Jacques Le Perthuis des Vauds warns his daughter to burn her own letters, her mother's, his own, all. Nothing is more

<sup>1</sup> *André Cornélius* (*Œuvres complètes*, I, 412).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 400.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 348.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 341, 350 ff.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 365. For further examples of the influence of Shakespeare upon Bourget, see the Shakespeare library described in *Le Disciple* (*Œuvres complètes*, III, 78 ff.). In *Un Crime d'Amour* (*Œuvres*, I, 276), there is a quotation from a speech of Lady Macbeth. On the following page there is a reference to the "Hamletisme" of Armand.

<sup>6</sup> *André Cornélius*, pp. 361 ff.

<sup>7</sup> *Le Disciple* (1889), p. 205.

<sup>8</sup> *Suicides*, in *Les Sœurs Rondoli*, p. 235.

<sup>9</sup> For old love letters discovered by Jeanne, see E. Maynial in *Revue Bleue*, LXXII (October 31, 1903), 606.

terrible, he asserts, than to nose into the history of one's youth.<sup>1</sup> Despite this admonition, Jeanne is doomed to discover the love letters of her dead mother and undergo the bitterest disillusionment.<sup>2</sup>

One other feature of *Le Fantôme*, the physical aversion which Malclerc feels for Éveline during her pregnancy, is suggestive of Maupassant. Paul Bretigny, in *Mont-Oriol*, is also of the race of lovers, and not of fathers.<sup>3</sup>

In the case of the connection between *Un Cœur de Femme* and *Notre Cœur*, apparently Maupassant was under obligations to Bourget. The problem involved in the two novels is essentially the same, and concerns the dual nature of humanity. As Lord Herbert Bohun sums up the situation at the close of Bourget's *Cœur de Femme*, Juliette de Tillières is a woman who has a sensual love for Casal, without ceasing to entertain a certain sentimental feeling for Poyanne.<sup>4</sup>

While conceding the credit for this theme to Bourget, rather than to Maupassant, let us admit at the outset that Bourget himself was in turn doubtless influenced by Laclos, not forgetting that also in *Un Crime d'Amour*, Bourget refers more than once to the Valmont of the *Liaisons*.<sup>5</sup> As Doumic remarks: "L'attrait qui porte Casal

<sup>1</sup> *Une Vie*, p. 228.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 240-243. This motif is combined with that of utter weariness over the monotony of life in *Suicides* (*Les Sœurs Rondoli*, pp. 237-239), where M. X— commits suicide after perusing his old correspondence. He had been led to drag his skeleton out of the closet by reflections on his humdrum existence (p. 232): "Tous les jours, à la même heure depuis trente ans, je me lève; et, dans le même restaurant, depuis trente ans, je mange aux mêmes heures les mêmes plats apportés par des garçons différents."

Monotony of existence is the theme of several other stories by Maupassant. In *Promenade* (*Yvette*, p. 202) appears the case of M. Leras who passes through the same daily routine for forty years. After brooding over the hopelessness of his situation, he hangs himself by the suspenders in the *Bois* (*ibid.*, p. 211). A similarly sad outlook is depicted in *Garçon, un Bock* (*Miss Harriet*, p. 235): "Je me lève à midi. Je viens ici, je déjeune, je bois des bocks, j'attends la nuit, je dîne, je bois des bocks. . . . Depuis dix ans, j'ai bien passé six années sur cette banquette, dans mon coin; et le reste dans mon lit, jamais ailleurs." Miss Agnes R. Riddell, in her unpublished thesis on *Flaubert and Maupassant: A Literary Relationship*, compares this incident with *M. Parent*, pp. 49-52, 62, 72-73. She thinks that the hero of *Garçon, un Bock* is modeled on Regimbart, in *Flaubert's Education sentimentale*, pp. 55, 246, 319-320, 564-565. In her opinion, Maupassant's references to old love letters and souvenirs hark back to *Madame Bovary*, where Rodolphe is described as cynically looking over the relics of his love affair with Emma, and remarking: "Quel tas de bagues!" (pp. 278-280). After Emma's death, Charles finds her love letters to Léon and to Rodolphe, with the result that life loses all interest for him. The people surmise that he "s'enfermait pour boire" (*ibid.*, pp. 478-479).

<sup>3</sup> Paul Bourget, *op. cit.*, p. 303. Cf. *Mont-Oriol*, p. 256.

<sup>4</sup> *Un Cœur de Femme* (*Œuvres Complètes*, III, 490, 500).

<sup>5</sup> *Un Crime d'Amour* (*Œuvres*, I, 159, 164).

vers Mme de Tillières, dans *Cœur de Femme*, est le même qui faisait souhaiter au roué des *Liaisons* l'amour d'une dévote."<sup>1</sup> However, after due allowance is made for the influence of the famous picture of eighteenth century morals, the fact remains that in *Cœur de Femme* Bourget is at least on familiar ground. The main problem of the woman cherishing sentimental reveries on the one hand, but yielding to ungovernable appetite for sensations on the other, is also that of Thérèse, in *Cruelle Énigme* (1885).<sup>2</sup> There are numerous other references in Bourget's works to the dual conflict which is the heritage of man, the matter being of paramount importance in the character of Robert Greslou, *Le Disciple*.

The conclusion toward which this discussion points is that the literary obligations existing between Bourget and Maupassant were more important than Maynial, for example, seems prepared to concede. Despite his reserve, however, Maynial admits readily that the authors must without doubt have communicated to each other, in the course of their conversations, the ideas, if not the actual plots, of certain of their works.<sup>3</sup> From the evidence at hand, the general direction of this literary influence appears most often to have been from Maupassant to Bourget.

Before leaving the matter of Maupassant's influence, mention should be made of at least two of his stories which may have furnished suggestions to Rudyard Kipling. *Misti*,<sup>4</sup> a tale which appeared in *Gil-Blas* in January, 1884, concerns a pet cat—called "Mouton"—with almost human attributes, intelligent as a child, and so idolatrous of his mistress that he made more than a fetish of her. Kipling's Bimi, the all too affectionate pet orang-outang of Bertran, French "king of beasts—tamer men,"<sup>5</sup> possessed similar human endowment: "Den I felt at der back of my neck der fingers of Bimi," declares Hans Breitmann. "Mein Gott! I tell you dot he talked through dose fingers. It was der deaf-and-dumb alphabet all complete. . . ." Mouton, more subtly, slept on his mistress' pillow, where she could hear his heart beat.

<sup>1</sup> *Portraits d'Écrivains*, II (1909), 14.

<sup>2</sup> *Cruelle Énigme* (*Œuvres*, I, 82). Cf. p. 113 ff.

<sup>3</sup> E. Maynial, *op. cit.*, p. 203.

<sup>4</sup> Collection entitled *Yvette*, pp. 273-283.

<sup>5</sup> *Bertran and Bimi*, in *Life's Handicap* (Doubleday, Page & Co., 1913), X, 336-342.

One day, when a young man made love to Mouton's mistress, and embraced her, as one embraces when one loves, suddenly Mouton uttered a never-to-be-forgotten cry, and tore out the eyes of his rival. Bimi was slower to act. For a time after the marriage of Bertran he merely sulked, till one day, in the absence of his master, he killed the woman of whom he was madly jealous.

The conclusion of *Bertran and Bimi* has certain features in common with Maupassant's *Un Loup*,<sup>1</sup> which appeared in *Le Gaulois* in 1882. The mysterious wolf, which seemed to think like a man, was the cause of the death of Jean d'Arville. Jean's younger brother, François, drove the monster to bay, charging him, cutlass in hand. Then, seizing the beast by the neck, without even making use of his weapon, François strangled him slowly, listening to his dying breath and to the weakening pulsations of his heart. Furious as was François for the death of his brother, he was no more so than Bertran for the loss of his wife. "Now you know der formula of der strength of der orang-outang—it is more as seven to one in relation to man," is the calculation of Hans Breitmann. "But Bertran, he haf killed Bimi mit sooch dings as Gott gif him. Dat was der miracle."

Perhaps the most conspicuous cases of imitation of Maupassant are to be found in the work of Gabriele D'Annunzio.<sup>2</sup> In the *Novelle della Pescara*, for instance, borrowings are made from Maupassant which Lumbroso does not hesitate to brand as plagiarisms. Maynial employs a milder term, although he does not contest the fact of the resemblances in question. And certainly the close imitation of Flaubert by Maupassant—even in such a passage as the rendezvous of *Bel-Ami* at the church of the Trinity, modeled on the cathedral scene in *Madame Bovary*—is slight compared with the imitation of Maupassant by D'Annunzio, in his more reminiscent moods.

However, we should not insist too much upon the influence of Maupassant, despite the enormous sale of his books. As M. Giraud justly observes, his influence was far below that of Taine, for example,

<sup>1</sup> *Clair de Lune*, pp. 39 ff. Incidents of the *Misti* and *Bertran and Bimi* type are occasionally found in real life. A friend vouches for the following occurrence, which happened while he was a student at a German university. A young student, accompanied by his pet collie, went for a walk with his mistress. The details of the difficulty that followed are not perfectly clear, but at any rate the dog—whether through jealousy or not—attacked the woman, and was with difficulty prevented from killing her.

<sup>2</sup> A. Lumbroso, *op. cit.*, pp. 519-545.

although Taine apparently had not one-tenth as many readers as Maupassant.<sup>1</sup>

Furthermore, if Maupassant's influence upon his contemporaries is easily exaggerated, so was his own indebtedness to other writers not excessive, after all. The limit which he deliberately set upon his field of production was at once a source of strength, as well as of weakness.<sup>2</sup> In fact, after due allowance has been made for all literary influences, including that of Flaubert, it must be owned that his principal source was his own observations. For him, as for the other realists, the most important part of the preparation for his stories was the taking of notes, despite the contention of Paul Bourget to the contrary.<sup>3</sup> It is this matter which will be discussed in an article to be published shortly.

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<sup>1</sup> Victor Giraud, *op. cit.*, p. 174.

<sup>2</sup> *Œuvres posthumes*, II, 100 (*Essai sur Flaubert*).

<sup>3</sup> A. Lombroso, *op. cit.*, p. 612 (*Souvenirs intimes de M. Ch. Lapierre*).

[CORRECTION.—*Modern Philology*, XIV, 163: for "Villemessant" read: "A protégé of Villemessant."]

## LES POÉSIES CHINOISES DE BOUILHET

Des romantiques, Th. Gautier ne fut pas le seul qui emprunta à la littérature chinoise. Un autre poète, Louis Bouilhet, y discerna une veine nouvelle que son souple talent pourrait exploiter. Dans la préface aux œuvres posthumes de son ami et compatriote, *Dernières Chansons*, Gustave Flaubert déclare que ce fut après le coup d'Etat que Bouilhet se tourna vers la Chine. Non content, comme Gautier, des traductions, il se mit "à l'apprentissage du chinois qu'il étudia pendant dix ans de suite, uniquement pour se pénétrer du génie de la race, voulant faire un grand poème sur le Céleste Empire dont le scénario est complètement écrit." N'ayant pas ce scénario sous les yeux, nous n'examinerons que les poésies chinoises des deux recueils: *Festons et Astragales* et *Dernières Chansons* (édition Lemerre). Nous apprendront-elles comment cet esprit si latin interpréta l'Extrême Orient ?

Ces pièces sont peu nombreuses. *Festons et Astragales* (1859) en ont trois: *Tou-Tsong*, *le Barbier de Pékin*, *le Dieu de la Porcelaine*. Les *Dernières Chansons* (1872) sont moins avares; sur leurs cinquante-cinq pièces, huit se rattachent à la Chine. Ce sont: *Imité du Chinois*, *la Chanson des Rames*, *la Paix des Neiges*, *le Tung-whang-fung*, *Vers Paï-lui-chi*, *l'Héritier de Yang-ti*, *le Vieillard libre*, *la Pluie venue du mont Ki-chan*.

Il n'est pas nécessaire de faire un examen minutieux de ces morceaux pour découvrir que sept sur les onze ne s'inspirent pas de pièces chinoises, ils n'ont que *l'air chinois*, et nul besoin d'être au courant des choses de la Chine pour les composer. C'est la Chine conventionnelle, banale des magasins de curiosités, celle des cabinets de laque, des paravents et des bibelots, faite d'une douzaine de traits, prétendus caractéristiques, faux parce qu'ils sont outrés, isolés et limités. Bref, ce n'est que du *toc*.

Dans un article de ce journal (nov. 1915 et mars 1916, Th. Gautier: *le Pavillon sur l'eau*), nous avons signalé un certain nombre de ces lieux communs chinois que l'auteur s'était cru tenu d'introduire, cangue, petits pieds des Chinoises, grande muraille, opium, etc. Bouilhet fait de même: c'est le fleuve Jaune, le soulier à pointe

retroussée, le mandarin à bonnet pointu et son parasol, les pavillons à jour ornés de clochettes, les buffets sculptés remplis de porcelaine, les cloisons transparentes, la jonque, les bonzes, la queue et la tête rasée, les pagodes, magots ou poussahs, le thé, le riz et les nids d'hirondelles, etc. . . . Donc, chez les deux romantiques, même illusion dans la touche de couleur locale. Tous deux affectent de croire par exemple, que l'opium se fume comme le tabac dans la pipe. Le mandarin Tou-Tsong "fume l'opium, au coucher du soleil, | Sur sa porte en treillis, dans sa pipe à fleurs bleues."

Certes, Gautier a bien soin d'indiquer en détail la façon dont se prend ce narcotique, mais, chose étrange, lui aussi perd de vue les circonstances extérieures de lieu et de conditions. N'écrit-il pas des deux amis Tou et Kouan, dans son *Pavillon sur l'eau*? "C'était un plaisir pour eux de s'envoyer du haut du balcon des salutations familières et de fumer la goutte d'opium enflammée sur le champignon de porcelaine en échangeant des bouffées bienveillantes." Or, le spectacle que présente un éthéromane ou morphinomane se livrant à sa passion se rapproche bien plus de celui du misérable inhalant sa funeste fumée que ce dernier ne rappelle le fumeur de pipe le plus endurci.

Au sujet de la troisième pièce, nous ferons seulement remarquer qu'il n'y a pas de dieu de la porcelaine dans l'Olympe chinois, bien que celle-ci doive son invention et quelques-uns de ses plus beaux produits à la Chine. Mais la porcelaine étant chose assez merveilleuse pour avoir son dieu, Bouilhet le lui créa à l'aide d'une note de Rémusat sur un certain temple de *Kouanym* (*Deux Cousines*, II, 49). "*Kouanym* est le nom d'un *Phousa* ou l'une des plus grandes divinités de la religion indienne importée à la Chine. Quelques mythologues peu instruits en ont fait la *déesse de la porcelaine*. Mais c'est en réalité un dieu, qui n'a rien de commun avec la porcelaine. C'est à lui que se rapportent la plupart de ces figures appelées *Magots de la Chine* qui étaient autrefois en possession de toutes les cheminées." Donc, bien que ce poussah ne soit pas le dieu de la porcelaine, il pourra l'être et c'est lui qui est décrit dans la première strophe: "Il est, en Chine, un petit dieu bizarre, | Dieu sans pagode, et qu'on appelle Pu; | J'ai pris son nom dans un livre assez rare, | Qui le dit frais, souriant et trapu."



Quatre des huit pièces des *Dernières Chansons* sont d'une saveur bien différente. Versions en vers de poésies chinoises, elles sont exemptes de toute couleur locale, vraie ou fausse, à un mot près, *bonze*, dans la dernière. A chacune la probité de l'auteur a laissé une étiquette qui en indique la provenance.

La première, *Imité du chinois*, porte en sous-titre *Iu-kiao-li*, nom en transcription française du roman des *Deux Cousines* auquel Gautier a emprunté tant de détails. Cet ouvrage du XV<sup>ème</sup> siècle est regardé comme un des chefs-d'œuvre de la littérature populaire chinoise et fut traduit pour la première fois par Abel-Rémusat en 1826. Ce sont huit vers placés en tête du chap. VI du tome II qui ont séduit le poète, et on comprend pourquoi, si l'on sait combien il était fier de son art. Et c'est bien cette traduction qui est la source de la poésie de Bouilhet.

Il suffira pour s'en convaincre de comparer les deux textes. Si l'on objecte que l'écrivain français étudiant le chinois a pu s'inspirer directement de l'original, nous répondrons que la ressemblance verbale évidente des deux morceaux s'oppose absolument à cette supposition. Une telle coïncidence peut s'expliquer à la rigueur dans des traductions indépendantes en une même langue d'œuvres appartenant à d'autres langues indo-européennes où les mots correspondent plus ou moins. La chose est impossible dans une traduction du chinois en français. Nous nous en rapportons à ce que dit sur ce sujet le marquis d'Hervey-Saint-Denys (étude sur *l'Art poétique et la Prosodie chez les Chinois*, en tête de sa traduction des *Poésies de l'Epoque des Thang*, Paris, 1862): "La traduction littérale est le plus souvent impossible en chinois. Certains caractères exigent absolument une phrase tout entière pour être interprétés valablement. Il faut lire un vers chinois, se pénétrer de l'image ou de la pensée qu'il renferme, s'efforcer d'en saisir le trait principal et de lui conserver sa force et sa couleur" (p. ciii). Abel-Rémusat ne déclare-t-il pas aussi qu'il est loin d'affirmer "que le sens de ces morceaux poétiques soit toujours rendu et à l'exception de quelques phrases qui ne paraissent pas susceptibles de deux interprétations qu'il se pourrait bien que la traduction qu'il en donne n'eût rien de commun avec l'original" (*Deux Cousines*, préface, p. 67, et t. II, p. 137). Dans la préface de la seconde traduction française de ce même roman par Stanislas

Julien, pour mettre hors de doute la grande difficulté d'interprétation d'une poésie chinoise, le traducteur place en regard les traductions d'une chanson faites par son devancier et par lui-même. Si Bouilhet avait donc traduit directement et indépendamment de Rémusat, sa poésie n'aurait pas présenté une telle ressemblance de mots avec celle du savant sinologue. Il faudrait aussi admettre, si l'on veut soutenir la proposition de la traduction directe, que le poète fût devenu assez fort en chinois pour se mesurer avec un tel maître. Or, aucun de ses autres emprunts n'en fournit la preuve et tous démontrent le contraire. Si Bouilhet a appris le chinois "pour se pénétrer du génie de la race," il ne nous a laissé aucune poésie qui soit la version directe en vers français de ce génie.

Sous des déguisements divers,  
Plâtre ou fard, selon ton envie,  
Masque tes mœurs, cache ta vie;  
Sois honnête homme, en fait de vers!

*Un seul beau vers est une source  
Qui, dans les siècles, coulera.  
Dix ans peut-être on pleurera  
Quelques mots trop prompts à la  
course.*

La strophe aux gracieux dessins,  
Où l'œil en vain cherche une faute,  
N'est pas d'une valeur moins haute  
Que la relique de nos saints.

Mais aussi point de flatteries  
Pour l'inepte ou le maladroit!  
Le pur lettré seul a le droit  
D'en arranger les broderies.

Tout poème perd ses appas  
Dans les bassesses du langage.  
Si nous traversons un village,  
Causons-y,—mais n'y chantons pas!

Qu'on plâtre sa réputation, qu'on  
farde sa conduite, qu'on sème l'or,  
Mais qu'en littérature, au moins, on  
ne se permette pas de larcins!

Une seule expression poétique est une  
source qui coulera pendant des  
siècles;  
Dix années de chagrin peuvent être  
la suite de quelques lignes.

De beaux vers  
sont aussi précieux  
que les reliques d'un saint.

L'homme de génie confiera-t-il à  
d'autres la broderie de la poésie?

Si vous vous livrez au plaisir d'une  
conversation de village,  
Gardez de vous laisser aller à la ten-  
tation d'y chanter pour passer le  
temps.

*La Chanson des rames* a sa source dans la traduction française du marquis d'Hervé-Saint-Denys (*Poésies de l'époque des Thang*, p. lxix). Le poète a indiqué l'auteur, l'empereur Vou-ti. Ce nom fut porté par plusieurs empereurs de la Chine. Celui-ci est Hiao-vou-ti, de la dynastie des Han; il régna de 140 à 86 av. J.-C. et fut comme beaucoup d'autres empereurs chinois l'un des poètes les plus féconds de sa cour. "Un jour, ajoute le traducteur, qu'il traversait le fleuve

Hoën, entouré de ses officiers et de ses ministres, il sentit naître en lui la verve, et composa la chanson connue sous le nom de la *Chanson des rames*."

Le vent d'automne s'élève, ha! de blancs nuages volent;  
L'herbe jaunit et les feuilles tombent, ha! Les oies sauvages vers le midi  
s'en retournent.

Déjà fleurit la plante Lân, ha! déjà se répand le parfum des chrysanthèmes.  
Moi, je pense à la belle jeune fille, ha! que je ne saurais oublier.

Mon bateau flotte doucement, ha! traversant le fleuve de Hoën;  
Au milieu de ses rapides eaux, ha! qui jaillissent en vagues écumanes,  
Au bruit des flots et des tambours, ha! j'improviserai la *Chanson des rames*.  
Plus vif a été le plaisir, ha! plus profonde est la tristesse qui lui succède.  
La force et la jeunesse, combien durent-elles, ha! et contre la vieillesse que  
faire!

Il est souvent aussi oiseux que présomptueux de rechercher les motifs qui déterminent les poètes dans le choix de leurs sujets et de leurs rythmes. Il ne sera pas toutefois téméraire d'avancer que, si c'est le fond qui attirera le poète vers le poème inséré dans *Iu-kiao-li*, c'est certainement la forme qui séduisit ici l'écrivain romantique. En effet, il voulut faire passer le petit poème chinois dans le français tel quel, il en fit pour ainsi dire un calque. Afin de faire voir jusqu'où il poussa l'imitation nous mettrons l'original et la copie en regard sans nous astreindre pourtant à reproduire tous les mots de la transcription; des tirets remplaceront les mots (monosyllabiques, comme on sait), exception faite pour les rimes.

Tsieou fong ki, hy! pe yun feï;	Bois chenus! ah! vent d'automne!
- - - hy! - - kouei.	L'oiseau fuit! ah! l'herbe est jaune!
- - - hy! - - fang.	Le soleil, ah! s'est pâli!
- - - hy! - - ouang.	J'ai le cœur, ah! bien rempli!
- - - hy! - - ho;	Sous ma nef, ah! l'eau moutonne,
- - - hy! - - po,	Et répond, ah! monotone,
- - - hy! - - ko.	A mon chant, ah! si joli.
- - - hy! - - to.	Quels regrets, ah! l'amour donne!
- - - hy! - - ho!	L'âge arrive, ah! puis l'oubli!

Même vers, l'heptasyllabe, divisé en deux hémistiches de trois syllabes par l'exclamation; même division en trois strophes de quatre, trois et deux vers; même ordre des rimes, excepté que le tercet et les deux vers de la dernière strophe, au lieu de porter la même rime roulent sur deux. A remarquer aussi que la poésie française n'a que ces deux rimes au lieu de trois, ce qui donne *aabb-aab-ab*.

Cette rigueur de forme a astreint Bouilhet à simplifier extrêmement l'original. Son imitation concerne donc la forme plus que le fond, elle est plus apparente que réelle. En effet, si l'heptasyllabe est en français un vers court, en chinois il est loin d'en être de même. Un lettré du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle, Han-yu-ling, s'exprime ainsi sur les vers de différentes mesures: "Les vers de quatre mots sont les plus simples, mais ils sont trop serrés; ceux de sept mots sont trop lâches et trop délayés; la confusion y est facile et le pléonasme à redouter. Les vers de cinq mots sont les meilleurs; aussi depuis les Han jusqu'à nos jours ont-ils toujours été préférés." L'heptasyllabe chinois correspond donc à notre alexandrin. Si le poète français s'était servi du vers de onze ou de treize syllabes, il s'y serait senti aussi à l'aise que l'empereur-poète dans son vers de sept et l'imitation en aurait été plus réelle.

Il s'en rendit compte, car il choisit le même arrangement strophique, mais cette fois d'alexandrins sans exclamation pour la pièce *l'Héritier de Yang-ti*. Il employa cette forme, sorte de sonnet écourté, avec assez de bonheur.

La pièce suivante *le Vieillard libre* a aussi sa source parmi les poèmes cités dans la même étude (p. lxiii). "L'empereur Yao, dit le *Sse-ki* (recueil de chansons), se promenant un jour dans la campagne, aperçut des vieillards qui lançaient le *jang* (sorte de jeu de palet) et qui chantaient joyeusement ce qui suit":

Prêt, dès l'aube, à déloger,	Quand le soleil se lève, je me mets au travail;
Je rentre avec la nuit noire;	Quand le soleil se couche, je me livre au repos.
J'ai dans mon puits de quoi boire,	En creusant un puits, je me suis procuré de quoi boire;
Dans mon champ de quoi manger . . .	En labourant mon champ, je me procure de quoi manger.
A l'Empereur suis-je pas étranger! . . .	Pourquoi l'empereur se préoccuperait-il de moi?

L'original est un quatrain de vers de quatre syllabes suivi d'un de sept: En choisissant le vers de sept et de dix, pour en rendre l'effet, Bouilhet a donc encore imité, mais moins servilement. Cette chanson très ancienne a un ordre de rimes que n'a pas conservé le poète français. Sur les quatre vers, seulement le second et le quatrième riment, et l'on n'est pas sûr que le cinquième qui est détaché rime avec le dernier du quatrain. Ce quatrain avec son vers court

de quatre syllabes et n'ayant de rime qu'aux deuxième et quatrième a une ressemblance aussi intéressante que frappante avec le quatrain du vers à quatre pieds des anciennes ballades d'Angleterre et d'Ecosse.

La versification chinoise, en ce qui concerne la strophe et l'ordre des rimes, n'a donc pas été sans intérêt pour Bouilhet. Il composa même un poème de dix-huit strophes appelé du nom des vers qu'il a imités. Ce sont les *Vers Pai-lu-chi*. Voici ce que dit de ces vers le marquis d'Hervey-Saint-Denys (p. lxxvii): "Bientôt vinrent les *pai-lu-chi*, douze vers divisés en trois strophes (la strophe régulière est désormais de quatre vers); . . . Les vers de quatre pieds sont à peu près abandonnés; on ne compose plus guère que sur le rythme de cinq ou de sept mots, et l'on s'accorde généralement à ne vouloir qu'une seule rime pour chacun de ces petits poèmes, mais, à l'égard de la rime, on voit régner la plus grande liberté. Tout poète en renom croit devoir imaginer quelque combinaison plus ou moins ingénieuse, dont les subtiles exigences sont souvent difficiles à saisir." Et ici s'impose une nouvelle comparaison avec la poésie de l'occident. Ces inventions concernant la rime et le rythme ne rappellent-elles pas les savantes compositions de nos troubadours et des minnesingers et maîtres chanteurs allemands? Le poète rouennais composa son poème de six sections de trois quatrains chacune, en vers de sept syllabes. Quant à l'ordre des rimes, il choisit celui qui est donné à la page lxxxi dans lequel le premier vers rime avec le second et le quatrième. La première section suffit comme exemple, puisque les mêmes caractères se répètent dans les autres.

L'écho douze fois frappé  
Par le vers sept fois coupé,  
C'est la cadence opportune  
D'un couplet bien échappé.

Ce galop sans halte aucune  
Semble une bonne fortune

A tout poète trempé  
D'une façon peu commune;

Et sur ce rythme escarpé  
L'oiseau d'ombre enveloppé,  
Récite au clair de la lune  
Les vers de Li-tai-pé.

Et c'est la traduction du modèle offrant l'ordre des rimes qui a suggéré le clair de lune; mais d'oiseau, il n'y a nulle trace dans l'original, qui est une des perles de Li-tai-pé.

Le bouddhisme n'a pas laissé indifférent le poète français admirateur du paganisme.<sup>1</sup> Parlant de l'introduction en Chine de la religion venue de l'Inde, le marquis d'Hervey-Saint-Denys cite comme

<sup>1</sup> L'*Héritier de Yang-ti* repose sur la croyance à la métempsychose, doctrine bouddhique.

exemple des idées bouddhiques reflétées dans la littérature deux strophes d'une poésie de Song-tehi-ouen (p. xxxvii), *La pluie venue du mont Ki-chan* (p. 185). Bouilhet a conservé le titre et indique l'auteur entre parenthèses.

*Le vent* avait chassé  
la pluie aux larges gouttes,  
*Le soleil* s'étalait,  
radieux, dans les airs,  
Et les bois, secouant  
la fraîcheur de leurs voûtes  
Semblaient, par les vallons,  
plus touffus et plus verts.

Je montai jusqu'au temple  
accroché sur l'abîme;  
Un bonze m'accueillit,  
un bonze aux yeux baissés.  
Là, dans les profondeurs  
de la raison sublime,  
J'ai rompu le lien  
de mes désirs passés.

Nos deux voix se taisaient,  
à tout rendre inhabiles;  
J'écoutais les oiseaux  
fuir dans l'immensité,  
Je regardais les fleurs  
comme nous immobiles,  
Et mon cœur comprenait  
la grande vérité!

La pluie, venue du mont Ki-chan,  
Avait passé rapidement avec le vent  
impétueux.  
Le soleil se montrait pur et radieux,  
au-dessus du pic occidental,

Les arbres de la vallée du Midi sem-  
blaient plus verdoyants et plus  
touffus.

Je me dirigeai vers la demeure sainte,

Où j'eus le bonheur qu'un bonze véné-  
rable me fit un accueil bienveil-  
lant. Je suis entré profondément  
dans les principes de la raison su-  
blime. Et j'ai brisé le lien des pré-  
occupations terrestres.

Le religieux et moi nous nous sommes  
unis dans une même pensée;

Nous avions épuisé ce que la parole  
peut rendre, et nous demeurions  
silencieux. Je regardais les fleurs  
immobiles comme nous;

J'écoutais les oiseaux suspendus dans  
l'espace, et je comprenais la grande  
vérité.

Reste les deux pièces *la Paix des Neiges* et *le Tung-whang-fung*. Nous ne savons rien de la seconde. Elle rappelle la poésie de Victor Hugo (1835, n° XXVII des *Chants du Crépuscule*). Amours de fleur et d'oiseau, de fleur et de papillon!

Quant à la première, en outre que maint vers chinois chante la neige, elle peut avoir été suggérée par la fameuse chanson de la *neige blanche* (Pe-sioue-ko) à propos de laquelle S. Julien (*Deux Cousines*, II, 189), rapporte ce qui suit: "Quand Seekouang, célèbre musicien de l'antiquité, jouait l'air de la *neige blanche*, les dieux descendaient pour l'entendre." La poésie de Bouilhet peint le calme de l'hiver à la campagne. Elle contient quelques passages dont l'inspiration se retrouve dans l'ouvrage où l'apprenti sinologue a tant puisé, *Poésies de l'époque des Thang*. Les onomatopées de la première strophe:



"Pi-po, pi-po! le feu flamboie; L'horloge dit: Ko-tang, ko-tang!" semblent être de l'invention du poète qui a lu aux pp. xlii et 88: "*Ling-ling*, les chars crient, *siao-siao*, les chevaux soufflent." Trois oiseaux figurent dans ce morceau, des corbeaux, un loriot, de blanches hirondelles; on n'a qu'à lire les poésies choisies par le marquis d'Hervey-Saint-Denys et celles qui se trouvent intercalées dans la prose des romans des *Deux Cousines* (traduction Rémusat) ou des *Deux jeunes filles lettrées* (traduction S. Julien, 1845) pour constater que les noms de ces oiseaux viennent fréquemment sous le pinceau des poètes chinois. De même que le premier, Bouilhet a aussi très probablement connu le second de ces romans, mis en français en vue d'aider spécialement à l'étude de la langue chinoise, car, en plus de l'intérêt que cette œuvre présente à qui veut s'initier aux mœurs et coutumes de la Chine, sa valeur comme instrument d'étude ne pouvait la laisser ignorer de l'aspirant sinologue.

*La Paix des neiges*, en outre de ce qui précède, ne renferme que trois allusions dénotant une connaissance un peu intime des choses de la Chine. Deux d'entre elles ont leur source dans ces mêmes, *Poésies de l'époque des Thang*. 1° "J'ai dans ma maison deux épouses, | L'une assise, l'autre debout"; rappelle la polygamie; ce sont les épouses du premier et du second rang. 2° "Très fort en littérature, | J'ai gagné . . . | Quatre rubis à ma ceinture," Dans la poésie intitulée *le Pavillon du roi de Teng*, on lit: "A la ceinture du roi dansaient de belles pièces de jade." Et en note: "C'est ce qu'on nomme *hoan peï*. Les princes et les hauts mandarins les suspendent à leur ceinture; la couleur et la forme en varient selon le rang de celui qui les porte. Reliées entre elles par de petites chaînes, elles sont souvent enrichies de pierres précieuses." 3° "Pour voir ce pays des sages | Je suis, sur le courant des âges, | La feuille rose des pêcheurs." Il s'agit ici de l'expression *chercher la source des pêcheurs*, c'est-à-dire chercher ce qui est introuvable (p. xciii).

Les vers *pai-lu-chi*<sup>1</sup> présentent aussi deux passages qui s'éclairent par certains rapprochements. 1° La IV<sup>ème</sup> section débute par une interjection: "Youg-hao! plus de tristesse!" A la page 70 des *Poésies* se trouve la *Chanson du chagrin* et cette note: "Les strophes de cette pièce sont entrecoupées, dans le texte original, par les mots répétés, *Peï lai ho!* (le chagrin arrive!) qui en forment comme le refrain, et qui sont aussi le titre de la chanson. En chinois, l'intention de ces trois



mots réunis est de produire une imitation des sanglots. La chanson du chagrin est précédée de la chanson du rire, où le rire est imité d'une manière analogue, par le refrain *siao hy hou*, composé du mot *rire*, suivi de deux onomatopées sans autre valeur que leur son. 2° Le second passage est la dernière strophe: "O lecteur de race élue! | O sagesse absolue! | O char à quatre chevaux | Le tout petit te salue!" Or, à la page 36, on lit: "Appelé à de hautes fonctions, Siang-ju a quitté sa province, | Monté sur un char rouge, que traînent quatre chevaux brillants." Et en note: "Le char rouge et les quatre chevaux sont les attributs des hautes fonctions auxquelles l'empereur l'avait appelé. Pour atteler quatre chevaux à son char il faut être d'un rang élevé."

Ces diverses touches ne sont ni claires ni très exactes, mais elles font leur effet sur le lecteur toujours disposé à se laisser éblouir par le miroir aux alouettes de l'exotisme.

Si les poésies de fantaisie qui sont en majorité donnent, dans leur fausseté, une nouvelle preuve de la souplesse et de l'ingéniosité du poète, celles où il a imité ne donnent qu'une bien faible idée du génie poétique des Chinois. Pour s'en convaincre, on n'a qu'à parcourir les *Poésies de l'époque des Thang*. D'une part, l'imitation de la forme, bornée à trois rythmes, ne s'est exercée que sur des sujets sans caractère ni couleur. Si l'on en excepte *l'Héritier de Yang-ti*, qui repose sur un fait historique et paraît original, ces essais sont restés stériles puisqu'ils sont uniques dans l'œuvre du poète. D'autre part, l'imitation du fond s'est arrêtée à deux pièces: *Imité du chinois (Iu-kiao-li)*<sup>1</sup> et la *Pluie venue du mont Ki-chan*.

On ne saurait trop regretter que la virtuosité et les dons poétiques dont l'ami de Gautier et de Flaubert a laissé des exemples convainquants, hautement admirés de ceux-ci, ne se soient pas appliqués à traduire dans des formes nouvelles des thèmes et des images, qui pour sembler parfois bizarres à des esprits d'occident, n'en sont ni moins frappants ni moins séduisants. Le Normand aventureux qui sommeillait dans le robuste Louis Bouilhet s'est contenté de faire en amateur quelques incursions sur les confins du royaume du Milieu; il n'a pas ouvert une large brèche dans la grande muraille de la Chine.

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<sup>1</sup> Dans l'édition Lemerre, il y a vers *Pat-lui-chi* et *In-kiao-li*, fautes de réimpression (?).

## "CERTE TAVOLETTE"

Chapter XXXIV of the *Vita nuova* begins thus: "In quello giorno nel quale si compiea l'anno che questa donna era fatta de li cittadini di vita eterna, io mi sedea in parte ne la quale, ricordandomi di lei, disegnava uno angelo sopra certe tavolette."<sup>1</sup>

What were the *tavolette*? The question is not answered, so far as the writer has been able to ascertain, in any edition of the *Vita nuova*,<sup>2</sup> nor in any Dante monograph.

The question is answered in Cennini's *Libro dell' arte*, the contemporary and principal authority upon all matters relating to the art technique of the *Trecento*.

The opening chapters of Cennini's work are addressed to beginners in the practice of drawing. Chapters V and VI are as follows:

### CAPITOLO V

*A che modo cominci a disegnare in tavoletta, e l'ordine suo.*

Si come detto è, dal disegno t'incominci. Ti conviene avere l'ordine di poter incominciare a disegnare il più veritevole. Prima, abbi una tavoletta di bosso, di grandezza, per ogni faccia, un sommesso; ben pulita e netta, cioè lavata con acqua chiara; fregata e pulita di seppia, di quella che gli orefici adoperano per improntare. E quando la detta tavoletta è asciutta bene, togli tanto osso ben tritato per due ore, che stia bene; e quanto più sottile, tanto meglio. Poi raccoglilo, tiello, e conservalo involto in una carta asciutta: e quando tu n'hai bisogno per ingessare la detta tavoletta, togli meno di mezza fava di questo osso, o meno; e colla sciliva rimena questo osso, e va' distendendo con le dita per tutta questa tavoletta; e innanzi che asciughi, tieni la detta tavoletta dalla man manca, e col polpastrello della man ritta batti sopra la detta tavoletta tanto, quanto vedi ch' ella sia bene asciutta. E viene inossata igualmente così in un loco come in un altro.

### CAPITOLO VI

*Come in più maniere di tavole si disegna.*

A quel medesimo è buona la tavoletta del figaro ben vecchio: ancora certe tavolette le quali s' usano per mercatanti; che sono di carta pecorina

<sup>1</sup> Ed. Barbi, Milan, 1907.

<sup>2</sup> I have examined the editions of: Casini, Florence, 1890; D'Ancona, Pisa, 1884; Flamini, Leghorn, 1910; Fraticelli, Florence, 1873; Giuliani, Florence, 1883; Kiel, Chemnitz, 1820; Melodia, Milan, 1911; Scherillo, Milan, 1911; Witte, Leipzig, 1876; and the annotated translations of Norton, Boston, 1902; Rossetti, London, 1906; Cochin, Paris, 1914; Delécluze, Paris, 1872; Forster, Leipzig, 1841. On the use of waxed writing-tablets in the Middle Ages see W. Wattenbach, *Das Schriftwesen im Mittelalter*, Leipzig, 1896, pp. 51-89.

ingessata, e messe di biacca a olio; seguitando lo inossare con quello ordine che detto ho.<sup>1</sup>

Chapters VII and VIII describe the preparation of materials involved in processes of finishing the *tavolette*.

The *tavolette*, then, upon which Dante drew his angels, were presumably small panels of a sort used by beginners in drawing, some six inches square. The material was probably boxwood or old fig, possibly parchment, with a surface smoothed, cleaned, and carefully primed with bonedust, in the manner described by Cennini.

ELEANOR J. PELLET

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<sup>1</sup> *Il libro dell' arte, o trattato della pittura di Cennino Cennini*, ed. Milanese, Florence, 1859.

## THE PEASANT LANGUAGE IN FERDINAND FABRE'S *LE CHEVRIER*

In America Ferdinand Fabre is little known except, perhaps, as the author of *L'Abbé Tigrane*, a book unique among the more important realistic novels of the nineteenth century, in that it contains no women characters that are intimately concerned with the plot. *Les Courbezons*, Fabre's first book, was crowned by the Academy, and the others, twenty in all, were received with enthusiastic praise by his contemporaries. He always made choice of novel incident, and his plots, as if propelled by a mysterious fatalism, move steadily to an exceptionally dramatic climax. Though his readers were many, and though his books always brought the highest prices from publishers, he never attracted any considerable attention from the general public. Unfortunately, he restricted his studies of human nature to the priest and to the peasant, two types whose lives do not make a universal appeal. The priest has been described by many writers, but none except Fabre has found in him the inspiration for nearly all his best novels. The character of the peasant Fabre understood as no one else, not even Balzac or Zola, and he has portrayed it in all its phases. The most typical of his *romans champêtres* is *Le Chevrier*. This book, besides offering the most exhaustive of all the author's studies of country life, has the added interest of being told entirely in the speech of a peasant.

Both Fabre and George Sand, in their treatment of peasant life, gave themselves a task which Balzac avoided. They chose to tell their stories in a vernacular that would at least suggest that of the region of which they wrote. George Sand, in order that she might write in a language that would resemble the native speech of her beloved Berry, and yet be understood by all her readers, imagined that she was recounting the story of *François le Champi* to a peasant on the one hand and to a resident of Paris on the other. Fabre, in *Le Chevrier*, made use of the device of a goatherd of the Cévennes, who tells his love story to a friend from Paris. As Fabre wrote to Sainte-Beuve (October 5, 1867), this plan had at least the advantage

of novelty. It also heightened the realistic impression that the author wished to convey, and justified to a large extent the rather detailed descriptions of the sordidness of farm life among the peasantry.

We are told<sup>1</sup> that Fabre, in picturing to himself the scenes and characters of his rustic stories, more easily and clearly formulated his ideas in the *patois* of his native mountains. Since this *patois*, however, was not readily understood outside the region, the author of *Le Chevrier* conceived the idea of putting into the mouths of his characters the speech of the renaissance, that of Rabelais, Montaigne, and Amyot, which, for its quaintness of phraseology, resembled his native *patois* more than did modern French. While George Sand, then, endeavored to reproduce a peasant language, Fabre sought to create a speech that would give the effect of a peasant *patois*. Thus the story loses none of its charm, even for those who are entirely ignorant of the French dialects. On the other hand, to gain anything like a full understanding of the language of *François le Champi*, the average reader has need of an annotated edition.

Though George Sand, and to a less extent Paul-Louis Courier, may have been Fabre's inspiration, they in no sense served as models. The peculiarities of the language of *François le Champi* lie rather in vocabulary than in syntax and sentence structure. The author has made relatively little attempt to heighten the atmosphere of the story by reproducing a syntax adapted to the mind of a peasant. Fabre as a realist, on the contrary, has kept constantly in mind a medium of expression that would conform to the method of thought usual with a simple peasant lad. To gain this result he carefully carries out the plan to imitate the style of the sixteenth century.

His vocabulary may be divided into three classes: modern French, which constitutes the vast majority of his words; those borrowed from the sixteenth century, although the spelling conforms to present-day rules; and lastly, words that are apparently taken from modern Provençal. Very few words belong to the *patois* of the region, and the meanings of these few are explained in the text. *Patte-courte* is "un lièvre plus mesquin que le lièvre ordinaire"; *cabrade*, "un troupeau de chèvres"; *coquillade*, "une alouette"; *bastides*, "maisons-nettes." Moreover, in preference to the local dialectal forms,

<sup>1</sup> P. Pascal, "Ferdinand Fabre," *Revue Bleue*, XIX, 658.

Fabre has deliberately chosen a word common to Rabelais or Montaigne. He uses, for instance, *bouter*, which, as shown by the *Atlas linguistique*, is not generally found in the department of the Hérault, where the usual word is *mêtré*. It does exist, however, in the *patois* of Gascony and Auvergne. The same is true of *un brin*, usual in Gascony, Gers, and Berry. In the Cévennes, only *oem pâû* occurs. *Bailler* for "donner," although common in other parts of the Midi, seems to be rare in the Hérault.

Apparently, then, Fabre did not desire words that would give local coloring, so much as words which, by their quaintness, would set forth the personality of his characters. George Sand constantly employed rare words restricted to the language of familiar and inelegant conversation or to the dialects of the provinces. Among these we find: *s'accoiser*, *détempcer*, *égrolé*, *cheret*, *éclocher*, *tabâtre*, *alochons*, *bessons*, all of which would cause the reader difficulty. In contrast to these we find the goatherd of the Cévennes using *besogner*, *gente*, *sapiente*, *seoir*, *ouïr*, *souvent fois*, *mélancolieux*, *devers*, and *liesse*. They are quaint or obsolete now, but none the less readily understood. Modern words Fabre often employs according to their sixteenth-century meanings, as *larguer*, in the sense of "to chase" or "drive," *partance* as equivalent to *départ*, and *devis* for *propos*.

He has so altered the spelling of the words derived from the Provençal that they appear to be French, although retaining their original meaning. Some of these are: *couder* from the Provençal *couida*, which is equivalent to "faire le coude"; *devers*, which is the same as the sixteenth-century French word; *esprité*, from *esprita*, meaning "avoir de l'esprit"; *ételles*, from *estello*, in French "église"; *fougasse*, *fougassa*, the modern "fouace"; *précon*, from *precoun*, "un crieur public"; *quilles*, from *quiho*, "jambe mince," which occurs in modern slang; *répiquer*, from *repica*, in the sense of "refrapper."

Fabre shows a great fondness for certain suffixes, especially *-ance*, as in *souvenance*, *éjouissance*, *d la coutumance*, *demeurance*. He seems even to outdo Montaigne in his liking for long adverbs formed from adjectives. On one page (103) alone occur, *vitement*, *fermement*, *aigrement*, *semblablement*, and *humblement*. Of frequent occurrence are, *pareillement*, *aucunement*, *petitement*, *grandement*, *péniblement*, *mèmement*, *doucettement*, and *douillettement*. The peasant who here recounts his love story falls into the use of the diminutives when

speaking of his mistress, as *Félicette*, or *Françoquette*, or *Fantinette* and even when mentioning whatever has to do with her, as *fillette*, *chambrette*, *chaînette*, *amourettes*.

In regard to syntax Fabre does not adhere constantly to the usage of the sixteenth century, but he does so to a sufficient extent to afford an interesting comparative study. Those characteristics which he has adopted, in most cases, he repeats often and to great advantage. Like Montaigne and Rabelais he displays great freedom in his use of the article. For the most part, like them, he omits the definite article before abstract nouns and nouns used in a general sense; especially is this true of the partitive in the plural. Before concrete nouns the article is seldom omitted except in a definition or when stating an habitual fact.<sup>1</sup> He regularly omits the indefinite article before a qualified noun,<sup>2</sup> which accords with the usage of Amyot and Montaigne.

Of Fabre's treatment of adjectives there is little to observe, except that he betrays the same carelessness as to position as did Rabelais.<sup>3</sup> Adjectives such as *bon*, *vieux*, *jeune*, *beau*, are as likely to follow as to precede their nouns. He avoids the older forms of the demonstrative and possessive adjectives, and never substitutes tonic for atonic forms.

His use of the personal pronoun accords with modern rules, with the exception of the suppression of the subject with impersonal verbs in both negative and affirmative clauses.<sup>4</sup> In the case of the neuter demonstrative *ce* he reverts to earlier usage in employing it as object of a preposition or of a present participle, although never of a finite verb. We frequently find *ce nonobstant*, *ce néanmoins*, *ce pendant*, *sur ce*, *ce disant*. Like Rabelais he prefers the relative *lequel* to *qui*, especially in the feminine (pp. 23, 30, 31; Huguet, *op. cit.*, p. 119).

With the exception of the long adverbs already referred to, Fabre seems to use very few of the older adverbs constantly employed by the sixteenth-century authors, such as *adoneques*, *prou*, *moult*,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 17: "*Chèvres tombèrent en nos étables comme tombent noiz de l'arbre.*" So pp. 13, 27, 29, 37, 42. Cf. J. Le Maire de Belges, *Illustrations de Gaule*, p. 21: "*La manière de semer blé entre arbres et planter vigne en lieux convenables.*"

<sup>2</sup> Cf. p. 24: "*nul s'attendait à pareille question*"; p. 46: "*tout ceci fut chose plaisante*"; also pp. 27, 28, 37, 192.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Huguet, *Etude sur la syntaxe de Rabelais* (Paris, 1894), p. 414: "*Les astres ne y feront influence bonne*" (II, 28).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. p. 82: "*m'est avis*"; p. 95: "*point n'avait été de femme meilleure*"; p. 31: "*par manière de parler s'entend.*"



*pieça, oncques*. He has, however, adopted the pleonastic *tant* in the adverbs *tant seulement*, and *tant plus*, and *par in par ainsi*. For the second member of the negative Fabre limits himself to *pas*, *point*, *mie*. These, however, he generally omits, except when both are placed before the verb. Because of his fondness for participial phrases he restricts the subordinating conjunctions to a very few, and of these *que* is by far the most frequent. *Encore que* regularly introduces clauses of concession (pp. 373, 390, 400).

In regard to the preposition we note that *dans* rarely occurs in *Le Chevrier*, *en* replacing it in nearly all instances. Occasionally *en* replaces *avec*, as, "je le fisse en joie" (p. 49). The author frequently uses *à* where modern usage would require *pour*. We find the same construction in Rabelais.<sup>1</sup> Besides the old form *devers* for *vers*, Fabre also employs the preposition *auparavant que de* for *avant de* (pp. 351, 356). These few complete his list of the older prepositions.

In the syntax of the verb Fabre differs most widely from modern usage. He adopts the preterite as the conversational past tense. In his manner of employing the subjunctive modern rules obtain, except in conditional sentences where the subjunctive appears in both protasis and apodosis, as in Rabelais and Montaigne.<sup>2</sup> Sometimes a participial phrase serves as the protasis with the apodosis in the subjunctive. Again the past conditional occurs in the protasis and the pluperfect subjunctive in the apodosis. The following paragraph illustrates both constructions: "Ayant assassiné père et mère, soeur et frère, je n'eusse pas à ce point été saisi. De vrai, me semblait-il, je venais de commettre un crime, et certainement un gendarme m'aurait agrippé au collet, que je me fusse laissé mener en prison sans lui demander le pourquoi de la chose" (p. 40). Fabre makes comparatively little use of the infinitive as a noun, and never when preceded by the definite article. Neither does he make any extended use of it with pronoun subject accusative instead of a subordinate clause when there is no change of subject, although such a construction was common during the sixteenth century.<sup>3</sup> On the

<sup>1</sup> P. 43: "prise de compassion à ma douleur." Cf. Rabelais, II, 46: "né à domination pacifique sus toutes bestes."

<sup>2</sup> See Volzard, *Etude sur la Langue de Montaigne* (Paris, 1885), p. 111.

<sup>3</sup> We find one good example, however, p. 159: "Je considérerais s'en aller ma vie." For a list of the verbs that took such a construction in the sixteenth century, see Huguet, *op. cit.*, p. 44. Cf. Rabelais, I, 264: "Le clerc, pensant sa femme estre morte et la cure de sa ville vacquer, conclut en soy-mesmes que il harrera ce benefice."

other hand, he does make very effective use of the historical infinitive in vivid narrative: "Mais nous de le [le bouc] saisir tout en colère, de couper des sarments où pendaient des fruits verts, de l'enguirlander, et de lui permettre de manger la ramée, que nous ayant à cheval promené l'un ou l'autre au long du bief des Fontinettes ou des haies vives de Sainte-Plaine" (p. 102).

One of the most striking features of the style of this book is the author's use of both participles in absolute construction in place of subordinate clauses (pp. 16, 19). In this respect he particularly resembles Amyot. The present participle, whether adjective or gerund, with or without *en*, is always invariable. Its complement need not be the subject of the sentence. Often, as in Rabelais,<sup>1</sup> it is indeterminate: "Le lendemain de mon arrivée, réclamant un pic à cette fin de creuser une rigole à des eaux de pluie formant mare puante en la cour, on ne put me montrer qu'un tas de ferrailles rouilles" (p. 191; cf. 16, 21). Frequently the present participle takes a disjunctive pronoun subject, as, "moi ne gagnant plus de gages" (p. 118; cf. 181, 380),<sup>2</sup> and occasionally as the logical subject of *être*, "c'est ne sachant qu'en faire" (p. 13). The past participle in its agreement follows strictly the rules of modern grammar. In absolute construction it frequently precedes its noun, as, "eu égard au danger qu'il y a pour nous à sa naissance" (p. 23). When modifying two nouns of different gender, the past participle takes the masculine plural.

Like all the writers of the sixteenth century, Fabre displays the utmost freedom as to word order. He adopts all possible arrangements of subject, verb, and attribute. In illustration of the order of verb, attribute, subject, we find: "Dans cet espace, où montagnes et vallées, où torrents coulent en hiver entraînant troncs d'arbres et rochers en leurs eaux neigeuses, se trouvent éparpillées fermes et métairies des riches, bordes et huttes des pauvres gens" (p. 22). For the order of verb, adverbial clause, subject, we have: "Quand brilla, non loin de la mare, comme si du ciel une étoile fût tombée dans la campagne, une lumière éclatante" (p. 50). Frequently phrases modifying the verb open the sentence followed by verb and subject,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Rabelais, I, 245: "La portant ainsi et la faisant sonner par les rues, tout le bon vin d'Orléans poussa et se gasta." See Huguot, *op. cit.*, p. 219.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Rabelais, III, chap. 3: "moy faisant à l'un usage plus ouvert et chère meilleure qu'es autres."

as, "En les yeux petits et rouges de la vieille *parut abondance* de larmes" (p. 197). Sometimes the verb is first: "*arriva* chez nous un *soldat*" (p. 401). Fabre is very fond of opening his sentences with long participial phrases followed by subject and then verb, or verb then subject. One sentence may contain both arrangements, as: "Donc, abandonnant aux vieux et à Baduel les travaux des champs et le soin de la *cabrade*, pendant plusieurs jours, avec l'Hospitalière, nous eûmes occupation à l'affaire de notre mariage, moi disposant tout en la ferme, elle cousant une robe de percaline, que, prévenues de la circonstance, lui avaient envoyée les soeurs du Caylar" (p. 380). Another characteristic arrangement consists in placing both parts of the negative before the verb: "point ne s'offrait une occasion de m'y arrêter que je ne le fisse" (p. 49), or, "Point je ne me faisais faute de penser à la pauvre délaissée" (p. 95). He also frequently intercalates an adverbial phrase between the auxiliary and the past participle, and also between a verb and its dependent infinitive, as, for example, "La gaule du père Agathon ne m'eût, par un coup sec, coupé le mot" (p. 30), and, "j'eusse dû, autour de mon poignet, rouler solidement la ficelle de mon bâton" (p. 241). This construction having dropped from good usage during the fifteenth century, gained greatly in favor during the sixteenth, but quite disappeared during the next.<sup>1</sup>

His impression of quaintness and simplicity Fabre secures less through word order, however, than through the general looseness of sentence structure and lack of coherence. In the following paragraph all syntactical connectives are lacking: "Finalement, vous le comprenez, Monsieur Alquier m'ayant aidé à m'étendre sur la paille de l'Eremberte et aussi glissé quelques bonnes paroles en l'oreille, telles que seul il savait en dire pour le réconfort de l'âme, possible ne lui était, oubliant toute la paroisse, de prendre racine auprès de mon lit."<sup>2</sup> This somewhat careless style is not at all displeasing, for the sense is never obscure, and it has the advantage of suggesting the actual manner in which a peasant boy would give

<sup>1</sup> See Volzard, *op. cit.*, p. 159.

<sup>2</sup> P. 102. Cf. Amyot, *La Mère de Coriolan*: "Mais à la fin, vaincu de l'affection naturelle, étant tout esmu de les voir, il ne peut avoir le cœur si dur que de les attendre en son siège; ains en descendant plus viste que le pas, leur alla au devant, et baissa sa mère la première, et la teint assez longuement embrasée, puis sa femme et ses petits enfants, ne se pouvant plus tenir que les chaudes larmes ne lui vinsent aux yeux, ny se garder de leur faire caresses, ains se laissant aller à l'affection du sang, ne plus ne moins qu'à la force d'un impétueux torrent."

expression to his thoughts.<sup>1</sup> Nothing is lost thereby in the earnestness of the lad's appeal.

In a letter to Fabre, Sainte-Beuve<sup>2</sup> acknowledged that *Le Chevrier* was eminently a work of art, and expressed his appreciation of the author's scholarly methods in creating its peculiar style. He felt, nevertheless, the reader would receive greater pleasure from the story had the author only now and then lapsed into the peasant vernacular. What Sainte-Beuve criticized, however, the poet Mistral praised.<sup>3</sup> He declared that Fabre was fortunate in his choice of style, and that it was delightful and racy of the locality of which he wrote. More than this, it lends a certain tone to the story which relieved parts that otherwise would have been sordid. Without this appropriate language much of the boy's confession would have sunk to the level of pure animalism, but through its medium it becomes artistic and often poetic. It is essential to a sympathetic understanding of the love story and to a full realization of the peasant's character. This, as it seems to me, was the result the author sought to accomplish.

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<sup>1</sup> Fabre may well have taken his idea of a style adapted to the mind and education of the speaker from Rabelais, who constantly alters his diction and phraseology according to whether Panurge, Frère Jean, Gargantua, or Pantagruel is speaking. See Huguët, *op. cit.*, p. 425.

<sup>2</sup> June 26, 1868. "Cher Monsieur, Depuis que j'ai reçu *Le Chevrier*, j'ai bien des fois pensé à vous, et, si mon remerciement n'est pas allé plus tôt vous trouver, c'est que ma santé me dispose souvent à remettre ce que j'aimerais le mieux faire. Il faudrait toute une dissertation pour traiter avec vous les questions que soulève ce roman d'art et de style. Il y a des études doublement savantes dans votre tableau; celle du pays et celle du langage. Sur ce dernier point, vous avez pris, en quelque sorte, le taureau ou du moins le bouc par les cornes: en soutenant la gageure pendant un aussi longtemps, vous avez fait un tour de force. Mais selon moi, ce n'est qu'un tour de force. J'aurais mieux aimé que cet essai de langage rustique composite, à la manière de George Sand et de Paul Courier, ne régnât point durant toute l'étendue du livre. Si vous aviez pris la parole vous-même, si de temps en temps seulement vous aviez introduit vos personnages avec le langage observé et studieusement naïf que vous leur prêtez, vous auriez sauvé quelques invraisemblances, et donné, ce me semble, plus de satisfaction au lecteur. Il y a un peu de contention à vous suivre, tout en goûtant de charmants passages. Je ne vous donne point ces impressions rapides pour jugement. Il faudrait écouter vos raisons, car vous en avez eu; et dans tous les cas, vous avez fait dans cette œuvre acte d'artiste" (Pascal, *op. cit.*, p. 658).

<sup>3</sup> July 4, 1868. He says in part: "*Le Chevrier* est un livre consciencieux et écrit goutte à goutte d'observation locale. On voit que vous avez beaucoup hanté les causses des Cévennes, que vous avez vécu de la vie des raiou, que vous avez rêvé l'idylle sous les plantureux chataigniers. On sent que vous aimez votre pays natal, que vous aimez la gent rustique; et vrai fils de la terre, vous comprenez le sens du paysage, et ce que dit le vent, et ce dont parle l'arbre et ce que pense l'homme. Ils sont parfaits, vos paysans, et vos personnages sont vrais, vivants et sympathiques. Vous n'inventez pas la nature. Vous exprimez avec bonheur ce qu'elle a mis autour de vous, et vous l'exprimez d'une manière savoureuse et charmante" (*ibid.*, p. 659).

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

*Cornell University Library. Catalogue of the Petrarch Collection  
Bequeathed by Willard Fiske. Compiled by MARY FOWLER.  
Oxford University Press, 1916. Pp. xxiv+547.*

This catalogue, a magnificent volume printed at Oxford, will be recognized as the most important Petrarch bibliography in existence, and worthy to stand beside the Dante catalogue issued by the Cornell Library nearly twenty years ago. It is a striking tribute to the richness of these collections that a list of the books actually included in them is an indispensable work of reference even for scholars who may never be able to visit the library where they are housed. The Dante catalogue fills two closely printed volumes, while that of the Petrarch collection, although it includes the publications of the last twenty years, and is printed in larger type, is contained in one. Dante has been the occasion of far more discussion than any other Italian poet; yet the influence of Petrarch has also been both far-reaching and profound. His incomparable mastery of the Italian language, together with the human and appealing psychology of his poems, has led poets to study and imitate him with particular care, and the literary and historical references of his Latin and Italian writings alike offer abundant opportunity for scholarly investigation. The extent of the literature which has been published may be seen by consulting Part II of the catalogue (pp. 193-496), "Works on Petrarch." Many of the titles are of general works which treat only in part or incidentally of Petrarch; others are of unimportant imitations, sometimes single poems inspired by his lyrics. These, however, as well as the more significant titles, show the vogue and influence of the poet. References are added to reviews of the books mentioned. There is a large amount of valuable information concerning the editions of Petrarch and also many of the works about him, in critical and descriptive notes, which frequently indicate quite fully the contents of a volume. The subject index gives the title and date of the writings referred to, not merely the author's names as in the Dante catalogue. There is an appendix on iconography, and one (written by Mr. Fiske) on certain literary controversies. In short, the catalogue is a mine of information and a guide and inspiration for further study.

The collection includes over four thousand volumes, and in addition the catalogue contains the titles of articles in periodicals and sets belonging to the library, even when not in the Petrarch collection itself. Of the known editions of the *Rime* from 1470 to 1900—something over four hundred—all but sixteen are in the collection. Most of them of course have little or no

critical value; but such an approach to completeness lends importance to items otherwise insignificant. Of the editions before 1500, the collection includes twenty-three, lacking only that of Naples, 1477, of which a single copy is known, and another edition whose existence is doubtful. The rare commentaries of the sixteenth century are fully represented, as may be seen by comparing Suttina's catalogue (1908) of the rich Biblioteca Rossettiana of Trieste. There are several fifteenth-century manuscripts of the *Rime*, a beautiful illuminated page from one of them being reproduced (opposite page 69). The editions of the original text and of translations occupy one hundred and ninety-two pages in the catalogue.

The story of the collection is told in an interesting introduction by Mr. G. W. Harris, who succeeded Mr. Fiske as librarian at Cornell. It was begun by Mr. Fiske in 1881, and occupied much of his time until his death in 1904. He corresponded not only with booksellers all over Europe but with numerous authors, from whom he obtained many rare publications. It is noteworthy that the Dante collection, begun in 1893, was practically completed in three years. Mr. Fiske also gave to Cornell his unique library of Icelandic and Rhaeto-Romance books, and made provision for the maintenance and increase of all these collections. Scholars have reason to be profoundly grateful to expert book-collectors who, like Mr. Fiske, have the taste and knowledge as well as the leisure and the means necessary for gathering comprehensive collections of books on special subjects which so frequently reach the public libraries.

Until the Petrarch books came to America in 1905, they were kept in Mr. Fiske's library in Florence, a picture of which forms the frontispiece to the catalogue. The writer of these lines remembers vividly a visit to this library in July, 1904, a few weeks before Mr. Fiske's death, and immediately after the memorable celebration at Arezzo of Petrarch's six hundredth anniversary, where Mr. Fiske was the leader of a group of American Petrarchians. It was a most interesting experience to see him in the midst of his books, and to hear him talk about them. He was a bibliographer rather than a scholar or a critic; but his wealth of accurate knowledge and his untiring enthusiasm made him an ideal collector.

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*The Ad Deum vadit of Jean Gerson.* Published from the manuscript, Bibliothèque Nationale Fonds fr. 24841, by DAVID HOBART CARNAHAN. University of Illinois Studies in Language and Literature, Vol. III, No. 1, February, 1917.

In this scholarly edition of the *Ad Deum vadit*, a sermon preached by Gerson before the French court in 1402, Professor Carnahan has made a valuable contribution in a field which will undoubtedly prove increasingly



attractive to American investigators. French scholars have repeatedly given encouragement to workers in the Middle French period, but the latter have busied themselves largely with the publication of the verse of an epoch which was essentially not poetic, and have devoted relatively little attention to its vast and interesting prose literature. Yet the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries form the linguistic link between Old and Modern French, and offer a mine of information to the philologist as well as to the historian.

The Introduction occupies about twenty-eight pages and is devoted to a discussion of the following topics: (1) the life of Gerson, (2) the influence of Gerson's life on his works, (3) the influence of the three preceding centuries on the *Ad Deum vadit*, (4) style and composition, (5) mechanical form, (6) manuscripts and editions. After a brief account of Gerson's life, Professor Carnahan takes up the works of the famous Chancellor of the University of Paris. Their central thoughts (as had already been pointed out by Lanson) are justice to the poor and much-abused people, and peace in the Church and in the kingdom, and it was for these ideals of peace and justice that this noble and gentle figure scorned a life of ease and affluence. While the editor does not perhaps fully recognize the energy of the indefatigable Gerson, handicapped as he was by poor health and implacable enemies, he thoroughly appreciates the Chancellor's courage and unselfishness. We may note in passing (p. 17) an ingenious explanation of our author's well-known interest in St. Joseph, as due, in part at least, to an "idea of mystic relationship between himself and Christ, who was also a man of the people." Gerson alone, whose family name was Le Charlier, refers to Joseph as a *charlier* (wheelwright).

A complete study of the sources of the *Ad Deum vadit* is reserved for a later time. Gerson's natural inclinations were rather toward St. Bernard and St. Bonaventura than toward St. Thomas Aquinas. On the whole the language of the sermon is dignified, serious, and sincere, and if the style is often uneven it is the result of the conventions of the day rather than a consequence of a lack of clearness of thought. In fact Gerson was constantly struggling to free himself from the scholastic platitudes and allegorical absurdities in which his age delighted, and in this respect he differs strikingly from his celebrated contemporary, Christine de Pisan. It is only when the latter is off her guard, when she is carried away by intense personal interest in her subject, that she throws aside the trammels of pedantry and erudition, and produces passages of real eloquence. So if we feel while reading this sermon that Gerson neglects to take advantage of several good places to stop, and are inclined to marvel at the patience of hearers who could listen to so long a sermon in one day, we must remember that its mechanical form is simple when compared to that of earlier preachers. The structure of the *Ad Deum vadit* is as follows: the Latin text at the beginning is followed by the Exordium, and then come the first part of the sermon, delivered in the morning, and the second part, preached in the late afternoon. Each of these



Parts is divided into twelve sections, and each section consists of a scriptural passage (texte), the Exposition and the Oroison. The first part, the sermon proper, contains 2,045 lines; the second, the Collation, 1,132 lines.

The editor is fortunate in being able to base his text upon a manuscript which was probably written during the lifetime of Gerson, and which is "superior to the other manuscripts both from the point of view of mechanical form and of contents." This manuscript he calls A, and he uses three others, B, C, and D, which are also in the Bibliothèque Nationale, for collation. He has thus been able to obtain a clear and accurate text which leaves but few real difficulties. In accordance with the practice now frequently adopted the editor has retained the readings of his best manuscript, including their orthographic peculiarities, with the following modifications:

He makes a new division of words.

He makes the modern distinction between *u* and *v*, *i* and *j*.

He punctuates and capitalizes.

He uses the apostrophe, the dieresis, and the acute accent where there would otherwise be ambiguity (the grave accent seems to be confined to the word *après*).

He corrects obvious mistakes.

The editing of such a text is a matter of extreme difficulty, and it is with a full appreciation of this fact that the reviewer makes the following suggestions. The comma is sometimes used too freely, *par*, *ce que*—lines 370 and 2501 (cf. *par ce qu'ilz*—2658), *part*, —371, *fait*, —818, *confidence*, —980, etc. On the other hand, it should sometimes be supplied, as after *encerchera*—971. The dieresis should be used over the *y* in *oyl*, in *oyr*, and the forms of that verb in 1414, 1748, 2264, 2605; also over the *y* in *tray* in 587, *trays* in 520, etc. *A tout* should be printed *atout* throughout the text, as in 514 (and entered in the glossary in that form), and *ce cy* should be *cecy* (113, 646, 765, 943, 1566, 1821). *Advenir* should be divided (*ad venir*) in 139, 254, 376, 412, 601, 707; *a venir*—1434(2) as in 1887. Too much reluctance is shown to correct manuscript A, and in every case where other readings are chosen the reviewer heartily approves. In addition he would read *ce* for *se* in 1304, 1413, 1501, 1857; *tous* for *tout*—1316; *desrons* for *descouz*—407; *gaucher* for *gancher*—869; *furent* for *fuirent*—942; *nuement* for *neument*, 371 (cf. glossary), *pour tant* as in 2444 for *pourtant*—2349, 3028.

The glossary has been prepared with much care. It may be doubted whether in a work of this nature such words as *bailler*, *contenance*, *clore*, etc., should be included, especially when such words as the following are omitted: *passible*—218, *truans*—546, *degarpi*—731, *trebuechez*—1054, *vertus*—1294, *cause*—1578, *oste*—1733, *mourir*—2126, *mors*—2898, *complye*—3065. It is misleading to translate *entredemander*—916, to ask each other, and *entregarder*—2265, to look at each other; *depuis que*—2391, 3066, does not mean after that; *bouler*, *refl.* only means to enter after *en*, and a *tant* (see *tant*) only means until when it is used after *jusque*; *de* should be omitted before *ligier* in the

reference to 2461; *finir* should of course be *finer* (p. 140); *cogneu* should be *congneu*. No attempt has been made to define *quer* except when it means *for*. On page 137 *confusion* should follow *confrouesser*, and on page 144 *prouvable* should precede *puis*.

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*American Literature in Spain.* By JOHN DE LANCEY FERGUSON.  
New York: Columbia University Press, 1916.

The present work forms one of the admirable series of "Columbia Studies in Comparative Literature," which includes such sterling works as Spingarn's *History of Literary Criticism in the Renaissance* and Chandler's *Romances of Roguery*. Unlike others in the series, Mr. Ferguson's study is unhappily conceived. One had always suspected that the influence of American upon Spanish literature was next to nothing. That suspicion is converted into a certainty by the reading of this book. Seldom has a dissertation reached so negative a result. It is a pity that the industry and sound method displayed by Mr. Ferguson has not been applied to some more grateful theme. If, for example, the horse had been put before the cart, and the influence of Spain upon Prescott, Irving, Longfellow, John Hay, and others had been studied, the result would have better repaid the effort. Something has already been done along this line, it is true; but much remains to be done. The greater part of the thesis is taken up with copious extracts from Spanish critics who have sought, unsuccessfully, to interpret our authors to their countrymen. Much of this makes sprightly, entertaining reading, and it is fair to note that the humor of it does not escape Mr. Ferguson. It is interesting to see how completely Spain has misunderstood us; but, frankly, not all of this material is worth reprinting. Walt Whitman appears to be the only American author who has been honored with intelligent criticism at the hands of Spanish critics. No American author, not even Poe, appears to have exerted any material influence upon Spanish literature. The case is different with Spanish-American authors; the influence of Whitman upon Rubén Darío, for instance, is marked.

Chapters are devoted to Irving, Cooper, Poe, Hawthorne, Longfellow, Prescott, Emerson, and Whitman. These authors have been frequently translated into Spanish, but for the most part indirectly through the French. There is only incidental mention of Ticknor, in spite of the fact that his *History of Spanish Literature* is the American book best known in Spain. Mr. Ferguson may have excluded this as being a work of erudition. But in that case why devote a chapter to Prescott? Irving has met with little honor in Spain, even though a Granada hotel has been named in his honor. Mention of Espronceda's graceful tribute to Irving before the Spanish Cortes would have been interesting. We are grateful to Mr. Ferguson for

his new information concerning George Washington Montgomery, the American whose adaptation of *Rip van Winkle* as reprinted by Longfellow was the first Spanish textbook to be used in America. There are other curious bits of information, as, for example, that the best rendering of Cooper into Spanish is that of *The Two Admirals*, made by Montojo, later Dewey's antagonist at Manila; and that Longfellow has been presented to Spanish readers as a poet of orthodox Catholicism.

The bibliography of American translations into the Spanish affords evidence that Spanish publishers are more catholic in taste than discriminating. We find such works as *Las mujercitas* by Louisa M. Alcott, *El arte de hacer millones* by P. T. Barnum, *El Descubrimiento del Polo Norte* by Dr. F. A. Cook, *La cosecha humana* by David Starr Jordan, cheek by jowl with serious works by Emerson, John Fiske, Andrew D. White, Woodrow Wilson, and William James. (Henry James is still awaiting a Spanish translator.) This bibliography is interesting and valuable. Its miscellaneous character is inevitable. Of greatest value, however, is the bibliography of periodical literature. The nature of his subject led Mr. Ferguson to delve deeply into Spanish literary periodicals. One pursuing such an investigation must travel widely. Mr. Ferguson has used all the material he could find in the British Museum, the Ticknor collection, the Hispanic Society, the public libraries of Boston and New York, and the university libraries of Harvard and Columbia. Clearly, he would have gained new material if he had visited Paris and Madrid, and especially if he had used the periodicals in the library of the late Menéndez y Pelayo in Santander. Without going so far afield he might have consulted the library of Professor M. A. Buchanan of Toronto, containing one of the richest collections of Spanish periodicals on this side of the water. Nevertheless, the author has used no less than 164 different periodicals, which he lists, telling where they are to be found. This bibliography will be valued by Spanish scholars. It is a pendant to the similar lists of LeGentil and Churchman. Mr. Ferguson deserves only the highest praise for his scholarship: he has made the best of a bad subject.

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